The Great Stem of Souls

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The Great Stem of Souls

Reconstructing Mandaean History

Jorunn Buckley

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For Lamea Abbas Amara and Nasser Sobbi

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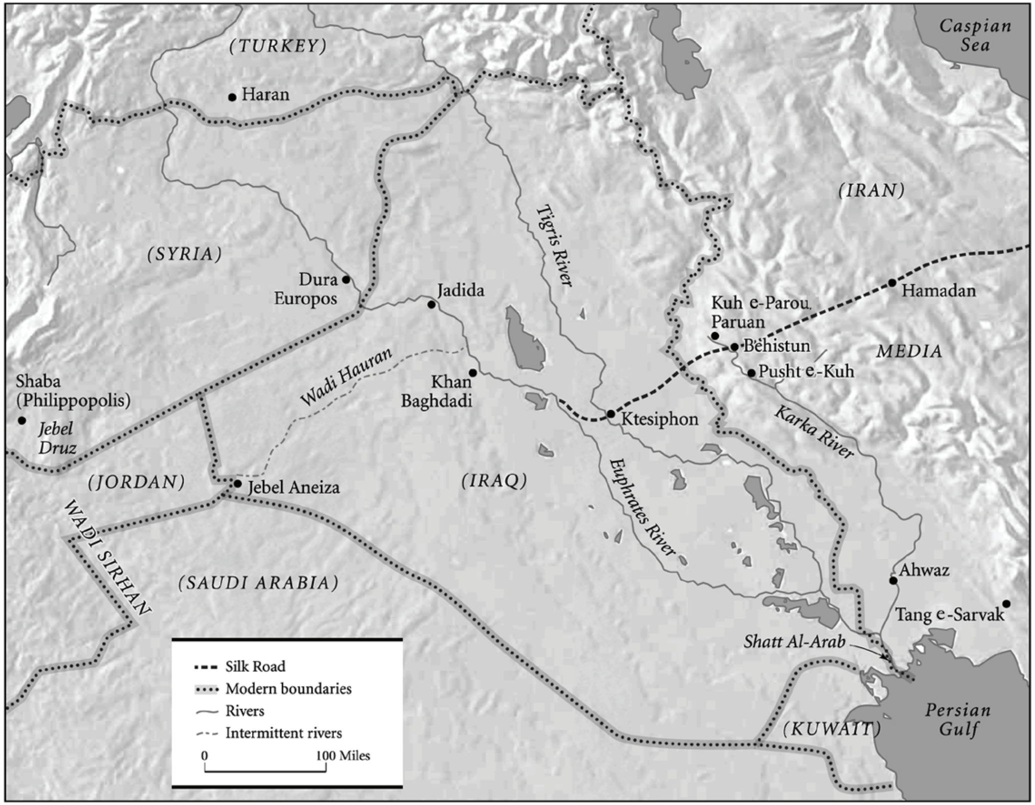
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Mandaean sites in the Middle East. Cartography by Robert Cronan.
© 2005 Fortress Press. Used by permission.

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The idea for this book stems from 1987, when Professor Rudolf Macuch suggested that I translate the Mandaean text *Diwan Malkuta ʿLaita* (which I did). During that task, I began to take an interest in the Mandaean colophons—the lists of scribes and the scribal postscripts that are appended to almost all Mandaean documents. It became obvious that the colophons provided a way to obtain a grasp on Mandaean history, and, subsequently, my work on colophons as a source for reconstructing Mandaean history grew through the years. At some point, it became evident that the research could take the rest of my life, but I had to stop somewhere. The result is here.

First, I must credit Professor Macuch (d. 1993) with stirring my initial interest in the colophons. He had, in fact, planned to start investigating the colophons himself, but other duties intervened. Professor Franz Rosenthal (d. 2003) always showed a keen interest in my Mandaean studies, and I remain grateful to him. I also thank John E. Woods of the University of Chicago, and Mrs. Margaret Hackforth-Jones (Lady Drower's daughter) in England.

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Unavoidably, this book contains materials of a hypothetical nature and also sheer errors, which will be discovered in due time. No other book exists in this area of research, so I must take some small solace in the knowledge that my work is only a tentative beginning. But for me, it has been an exciting task, in which many of the thousands of Mandaean people mentioned here literally became alive. I end with the Mandaean formula: "may Life be victorious!"

* * *

The following chapters of *The Great Stem of Souls* have been published elsewhere. An earlier version of chapter 2 was in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd ser., 5 (1995): 21–38, as "The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*." A shorter version of chapter 5 was in *Gnosis und Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Holger Preissler and Hubert Seiwert, 55–60 (Marburg: diagonal-Verlag, 1994), as "A Mandaean Correspondence." A shorter version of chapters 6 and 7 appeared in *History of Religions* 39 (1999): 32–49, as "Glimpses of a Life: Yahia Bihram, Mandaean Priest." An earlier version of chapter 8 appeared in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 59 (2000): 93–106, as "The Evidence for Women Priests in Mandaeism." An early version of chapter 9 appeared in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51 (1992): 33–50, as "The Colophons in *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*." An almost identical version of chapter 15 has appeared in *Und das Leben ist siegreich!/And Life is Victorious*, Mandäistische Forschungen 1, ed. Rainer Voigt, 29–46 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008) as "Once More: Mandaean Origins and Earliest History."

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Mandaeans, the last Gnostics surviving from the time of late antiquity, seem to have lived in southern Iraq and southwest Iran since the end of the first century CE. Precisely how early they originally came, and from where, is still a matter of scholarly dispute. They may have come from farther west, following the rivers from upper Babylonia; or, according to newly formulated or revived theories, they may have been more or less indigenous to Babylonia.[1] Most Mandaeans still live in Iraq and Iran, but now also increasingly in diaspora around the world.

Mandaeans have a large number of religious texts, many of them still untranslated into Western languages. Mandaean priests continue to transcribe the texts by hand in the old-fashioned way, though Mandaic fonts for printing have also become available in recent years. The very format of the Mandaean books or scrolls remains established according to firm standards over hundreds of years. Even in those texts that have artwork the art is formalized according to certain geometrical patterns, for ideally, there must be no wavering in the faithful transmission of text and drawings.[2] Most people who study Mandaean texts (in translations or in the original Mandaic) may pay little or no attention to the lists of scribes that are appended to virtually all Mandaean documents. Those lists, the colophons, supply the main basis for this book. The colophons reveal so far untapped historical information and they can be used to reconstruct, however rudimentarily, the outlines of Mandaean history.

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[1] See chap. 15 for a more detailed discussion, and the introduction to my *The Mandaeans: Ancient Texts and Modern People*, 3–6. See also Kurt Rudolph's timeline in "Der Mandäismus in der neueren Gnosisforschung," 274–77, and his article "Die Mandäer heute: Ein Zwischenbilanz ihrer Erforschung und ihres Wandels in der Gegenwart." At the ARAM-sponsored international conference "*The Mandaeans*," Oxford University, July 7–9, 2002, renewed attention was paid to the Mandaean history-and-origins question.

[2] A dissertation is waiting to be written on the standard Mandaean art form. This artistic tradition has never been studied.

WHAT IS A COLOPHON

In Mandaeism, to copy a manuscript is a meritorious act. A Mandaean copyist (usually a priest) may undertake the task as an exercise to remit his own sins, or he may be hired to perform the task for someone else. At the end of most Mandaean manuscripts, a colophon usually appears. This is a list of scribes stretching from the current copyist back to the first recorded one. Almost all Mandaean manuscripts contain colophons, excluding talismans and other short magical texts. These will, in most cases, have at least the name and lineage of the scribe himself, but seldom much more than that. In the case where the transmission of a Mandaean text spans, say, fifteen or sixteen centuries, a colophon may be very long, containing thirty to forty separate lineages, each consisting of two to fourteen (sometimes even more) names. A lineage belonging to centuries long past may consist of only two names: that of the scribe and of his or her initiator.

Some scribes are known to have been editors, and a few are careful to state their own collating endeavors and corrections of texts perceived to contain errors. Often, formulaic phrases assure the reader that a text, including the colophons itself, has been faithfully transmitted. To cut off a colophon is considered a grave sin, but such is found in a very few instances. Warnings against this practice indicate that it was not uncommon. A scribe may become tired and choose either to shorten the long lists of names, or to cut off the entire colophon in order to paste it onto another text, thus avoiding tedious work.

Not only do colophons contain information about central scribes and major priest/copyist lineages through centuries of Mandaean history, but the lists also give an impression of the geographical spread of the religion. Postscripts added to colophons may hint at doctrinal disputes, give information about persecutions and other political/social conditions, and offer portrayals of the personal life of specific scribes. Colophons written in or immediately after 1831 often describe effects on the Mandaean communityof the great cholera epidemic, “the Plague of Šuštar,” in that year. In addition, the many women’s names in the colophons demonstrate that women were scribes, library-owners, and priests. Chapter 8 below deals with women priests.

Correlating dozens of colophons is like working on a huge puzzle stretching over millennia. Pieces, that is, names, fall into place and slowly produce familiarity with recurrent scribes who copied many texts and who appear again and again. Their family relationships become known, and illustrious clans appear repeatedly. In very rare cases, we find disgraced priests. Defrocked priests do not lose their names. What is written must stand, even if the transmitted text comes via a priest who had a penchant for practicing magic. Corrections are relatively rare; the rule in Mandaean text copying is that no errors are to be erased. A line of dots under erroneous words means that the segment should be disregarded. If a scribe accidentally leaves out a whole line—or perhaps an entire paragraph—the text tends to crawl out into the margin of the sheet rather than to be squeezed between the lines.[3]

In accordance with the tradition of "heavenly books," we find, in Mandaeism, that the earliest recorded human scribe may claim that a Lightworld figure conveyed the text to him. Such a practice of course gives the text the highest possible status, beyond doubt and suspicion of human invention. But many colophons do not possess this feature, and a scholar is naturally attracted to the names of the earliest human scribes and to the possibility of determining their time period. Anyone intrigued by the "origins question" will find that correlating the early scribes in colophons becomes a particularly exciting task.

Usually, when I refer to early parts of a colophon, it will be clear that by "early" I mean the most ancient, "late" the most recent. Calling a scribe the "first" or "last," likewise, means "early" or "late." (I have tried to adhere to this rule, but I may not always be consistent, and then it is best to consult the context for the precise meaning.)

NAMES

In studying colophons, one needs to be alert to the complexities of Mandaean names. Every Mandaean has a *malwašia* name, a name given to the newborn child according to priestly calculations based on astrology.[4] This is the same as the baptismal, *maṣbuta*, name. *Maṣbuta* names are relatively few and tend to be repetitive, because there are only a limited number of available names, according to the basis for the name decisions: the zodiac. Examples are: "Adam, son of Maliha" or "Šarat, daughter of Hawa."[5] The name is used almost exclusively in ritual contexts, and it always designates the carrier in relation to his or her mother. A Mandaean may be reluctant to divulge his or her *maṣbuta* name to outsiders. *Maṣbuta* names are rare in colophons, and they appear almost exclusively in formulaic contexts where the beneficiary of a copied text is named. These names are also used in what are called *ẓhara*s ("insertions") in ritual formulas where the named person is specified. This happens, for instance, in a baptism or a death ritual. In this book, I use the expressions "*maṣbuta* name" and "baptismal name" interchangeably.

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[3] See chap. 13, "Mandaean Language Games and Obstacles," in my *Mandaeans*.

[4] See E. S. Drower, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran* (*MII*), 81–82, for how the names are calculated.

[5] See E. S. Drower, *The Book of the Zodiac (Sfar Malwašia)* (*Sfar M.*), 68– 69, facsimile text: 106–7.

In regular priest lineages in colophons, names are given in terms of the relationship between a scribe and his initiator, his *rba*. In colophons, "son" means initiate, and "father" initiator, regardless of whether a son and his biological father are meant. Often, a priest and his initiator really are son and biological father, but certainly not always. At times, a man may be initiated into priesthood by his uncle, or by someone in his own generation, or a priest even younger than the initiand himself. In the rare cases where we encounter scribe who is a learned layman, a *yalufa* (scribe), I have decided to assume that the scribe's father is the "real," biological father, because the scribe is not a priest. Women priests are designated in relation to their initiators, who may be their biological fathers. These women do sometimes have fathers or husbands who are famous priests. A woman priest with a female initiator is extremely rare, and when such a name seems to appear, it may be a *maṣbuta* name.

A copyist's own biological father's name may appear, for instance in the common blessing formula that includes one's own name and those of close family members and of one's initiator. This formula is often invoked at the beginning of a scribe's colophon. But one must be careful to note whether father and initiator are the same person. Often, they are specified as being separate men. Except when initiation relationships are indicated, the names in the blessing formulas are always *maṣbuta* names.

Priests' names are different from secular ones. A priest may be named "Adam, son of Sam," and here Adam is part of the man's own *maṣbuta* name (but minus his mother's name). The same holds for his initiator's name, Sam, but a priest also has a public, "secular," name that has nothing to do with the *maṣbuta* designation. Sometimes, both a person's secular name (if it is a layperson) and the *maṣbuta* name will appear in a beneficiary formula. For instance, we find the expression "I copied this book for (the salvific benefit of) Hadaiat, whose *maṣbuta* name is Adam, son of Simat," and then the list goes on, enumerating Hadaiat's male ancestors, beginning with his father's name. Then it may happen that, five links down in this layman's genealogy, priestly names suddenly show up, which means that

Hadaiat's great-great-great-grandfather (and earlier ancestors) were priests. Hadaiat and his family may be humble layfolk now, but they had priests in the past.

Clan names are a different matter yet again. So far, I have found over eighty different clan and family names in Mandaean colophons. Only a few of these are recorded in Drower and Macuch's *Mandaic Dictionary*.[6] Often, two or even three clan names are given for a scribe. *Laqab* and *kiniana* are the technical terms for family or clan names. Mandaeans tell me that the *kiniana* name is the most important. In the early parts of colophons, tribal or clan designations do not appear. It seems that such names began to be used sometime during the Middle Ages.[7]

In their regular lives, Mandaeans may carry Arabic or Farsi family names, some of which are "generic," pointing to geographical or tribal links, while others tend to mark the person as non-Muslim. Many Mandaeans avoid first names that are common in Islamic tradition, for instance. At times, Iranian Mandaeans may favor first names that belong to the pre-Islamic, Zoroastrian era. As in other Middle Eastern cultures, honorific names are yet another form of designation, employed as a sign of respect for older Mandaeans. To take two examples of Mandaean friends of mine, a name such as "father of Issa" or "mother of Zakia" identifies a man or a woman in relationship to his or her oldest son. Today, especially in Iraq, one finds that many Mandaeans use three-part names, so that the well-known Mandaean poet Lamea Abbas Amara, for example, has Lamea as her first name, Abbas is her father's name, and Amara that of her paternal grandfather. This type of name has no clan indication, and it is not identifiable as specifically "Mandaean."

Scribal lists in colophons usually follow a set pattern. First, a copyist identifies himself as "son of A, son of B, son of G," etc. If a scribe is transcribing for the salvific benefit of someone else, that person's name (both secular and *maṣbuta* name) and lineage are given. For instance, if the beneficiary is a woman, her *maṣbuta* name is used, but the text does not continue enumerating her mother's lineage: rather, it names her father and his lineage. If he is a layman, the names are secular; if a priest, his lineage will follow.

So, it is not only scribal lineages that appear in colophons but also those of beneficiaries. Therefore, when scrutinizing a text, it is important to be aware of prepositions, to note when a colophon says that a book is copied *for* somebody (i.e., for somebody's salvific benefit) or *from* somebody (i.e., from a particular text owned by a named person), because a beneficiary is not a copyist. However, when a priest is copying for his own benefit, we are dealing with *one* person—not two—and the text will say, "I copied for myself."

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[6] I give the list of names in appendix B.

[7] See chap. 12, "Tracking the Obscure Centuries," below.

PLACES

According to the book *Études sur la religion des Soubbas ou Sabeens* by the Syrian official M. N. Siouffi, who came to Baghdad in 1873, the dwelling places of the Mandaeans in the Ottoman territories were: Suq eš-Šuyuk, Naṣoriyah, Chatra, Safha, Djezaier, Qurna, Souaib, Chourch, and Amara, and in the Persian area: Šuštar, Chach-Veli, Farjara, Despour, Kautia, Gibar, Huwaiza, Muhammerah, and Chouaiyeb.[8] Some of these names of villages, towns, or districts are familiar, while others are not. It is not clear whether Siouffi's spellings reflect his own attempts at transcribing Arabic/Farsi, or the scholarly consensus of the day.

Suq eš-Šuyuk and Naṣoriyah on the lower Euphrates were well-known habitations of the Mandaeans. Chatra is north of Naṣoriyah, while Safha is unknown to me. "Djezaier" is probably identical to Jezira, the name of the district between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. (Less probably, it could be a garbled form of al-Azair, a town north of Qurna). Qurna (Siouffi's "Gourna") lies at the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris, in southern Iraq. Souaib lies west-southwest of Basra, but Chourch is unidentifiable at present. Amara, north of Qurna, did—and to some extent still does—contain a Mandaean population. It seems odd that Basra, on Šatt al-Arab, is not mentioned in Siouffi's list. Today, Mandaeans still dwell there, but most Mandaeans live in Baghdad, which is unmentioned by Siouffi. Mandaean populations move around, in response to disasters natural or man-made. For instance, in chapter 6 we shall see that the German scholar Heinrich Petermann, in 1854, had expected to meet Mandaeans in Baghdad and was surprised that no Mandaeans could be found there.

In Siouffi's list of Persian areas with Mandaean inhabitants, the city Šuštar, on the river Karun, has no Mandaeans anymore, but it was a center for Mandaeans in the past.[9] Chach-Veli must be Shavali, a village between Šuštar and Dezful. (I passed by Shavali in 1996 and was told that Mandaeans of the Choheili family had lived there in the past.) Farjara is unknown to me, but Despour must be a strange spelling of Dezful, an important Mandaean town in the past. It lies on the river named Ab-i Diz on a 1956 map. Kautia may be Kut al-Sheikh in Khorramshahr, and Gibar is perhaps Jobair in Susangerd. Huwaiza, near the Iraqi border and on a river running into Iraq, was a Mandaean center in centuries past. We shall see that several important Mandaean scribes lived in Huwaiza.

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[8] p. 159.

Muhammerah is identical to present-day Khorramshahr (ancient Charax Spasinou), on the Šatt al-Arab, a town with a sizable Mandaean population until the Iran–Iraq war of 1980–88. The last town in Siouffi's list, Chouayeb, probably Kuwaibdeh, is southeast of Abadan. Abadan, an important port, lies farther down the Šatt al-Arab from Khorramshahr. Abadan itself is not in Siouffi's list, but the first Iranian Mandaeans I ever met, in 1973, lived there. Today's Iranian center for the Mandaeans, Ahwaz, on the river Karun, did not have Mandaean people in Siouffi's time. Siouffi ends his list by saying that the Mandaeans of Šuštar possess the best religious knowledge, enjoying the highest esteem among their fellow-religionists.

At other times in history, additional Mandaean areas and villages will emerge, based on information in the colophons. Many places are absent from modern maps and even from hand-drawn ones in now rare books. To my knowledge, no maps have been made explicitly for the purpose of showing Mandaean territories through time. Wherever a relatively safe place could be found on a river, Mandaeans of southern Iraq and Iran are likely to have lived. The destruction of the river and marsh habitats in southern Iraq within the past decade has decimated potential Mandaean territories. Occasionally, nature takes its unpredictable course, and we shall see one example of a river that, in the nineteenth century, suddenly changed its route overnight, and the Mandaeans moved away immediately. But today, due to political constraints, Mandaeans in their home countries do not always live along rivers, and they may have to travel to perform their baptisms, or resort to modern, indoor pools with vibrating currents to keep the water "alive."

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[9] Siouffi says that it is identical to the ancient Susa, which is not strictly correct, for Susa is a different town, on the river Karkeh (I have been in both towns myself).

In a sheet of Drower's undated, typed notes, she says that a priest identified the earliest Mandaean settlements, in time sequence, as: Ṭib, Doraq (modern Shadegan), Šuštar, Suq eš-Šuyuk, and Huweiza. Today, some Iranian Mandaeans live in cities such as Tehran and Shiraz.[10]

A FEW TESTIMONIES

In Bat Yeʿor's book on the protected religious minorities, the *dhimmi*, who are subject to a special tax under Islam, we find the following statement from Ibn al-Fuwati (d. 1323 CE):

> As for the Sabians, who are outright idol-worshippers, who live in the province of al-Wasit [Iraq], they are not *dhimmis*, although they were so in the past. When the Caliph al-Qahir Billah inquired of Abu Saʿad al-Istakhari the Shafiʿi concerning their status, he declared their blood licit[11] and refused their poll tax. When they had wind of this, they bribed him with 50.000 dinars and he left them alone. Consequently, today they do not even pay the poll tax and nought is demanded of them even though they be under Muslim domination. May the will of the sultan be done![12]

The ʿAbbasid Caliph al-Qahir reigned from 932 to 934 (AH 320–22).[13] The extract demonstrates that in the tenth century, the categorization of the Mandaeans is in dispute, and that the people have lost the protected status. That there still is a concentration of Mandaeans in the district of Waṣiṭ (southeast of Baghdad) at this time is illuminating, as I know of no other sources of Mandaean habitation patterns in the tenth century. (Waṣiṭ was not mentioned in Siouffi's list). As we shall see, the Mandaeans have a scribal center in the town of Ṭib in Wāsit in the earliest Islamic era—and also in the period immediately before the rise of Islam. In al-Fuwati's own time, in the fourteenth century, the Mandaeans still do not pay the *dhimmi* tax, but obviously continue their lives. One must assume that bribery ensures relative safety.

The cholera of 1831 nearly eradicated the Mandaean religion. All the priests died. How the religion was resuscitated through the efforts of the *yalufa*s Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Kamisia family, and his brother-in-law Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, of the 'Aziz and Kupašia families, is a topic of one of the chapters of this book. According to Yahia Bihram's postscripts, thirteen *yalufa*s were willing to become priests in Suq eš-Šuyuk when Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun arrive there in the aftermath of the cholera. The two men first initiated one another into priesthood and then made priests of the thirteen *yalufa*s. It is likely that all thirteen were not inhabitants of Suq eš-Šuyuk, but that they had gathered there for the express purpose of becoming priests. One may assume that all of them, like Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun themselves, had already been trained to a greater or lesser extent by their now perished fathers/initiators. Of particular interest here is Bibia Mudalal, Yahia Bihram's sister and Ram Zihrun's wife, who was a priest herself (perhaps belonging among the thirteen).[14]

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[10] See my "Mandaean Community in Iran."

[11] Meaning, they can be legally killed.

[12] Bat Ye'or, *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians under Islam*, 192.

[13] Jere L. Bachrach, *A Near East Studies Handbook*, 18, 32.

Disasters befalling the Mandaeans are not the only ones described in the colophons. More than one hundred years after the cholera epidemic, in Lamea Abbas Amara's *Ginza* from 1935,[15] one finds the information that at that time, 1935, the Beduin tribesmen were taken captive in Suq eš-Šuyuk, their weapons confiscated, their leaders killed.

But mostly, the postscripts deal with the conditions of the Mandaeans themselves. In the document called *The Coronation of the Great Šišlam* from 1599 (*Drower Collection* [*DC*] *54*), a priest initiation text, the colophon—which Drower does not translate[16]—the priest Sam Šitlan, son of Ram Bayan, of the Ša'puria clan, says that the Mandaean cult hut, the *mandi*, on the channel Šamani'a in Basra, has been torn out twice by the local Muslim leader Karam, son of Sai''id Mubarak. "May the great King of Light warn him!" Sam Šitlan exclaims. Moreover, there is thievery in the Mandaean priesthood, and "no one can stand." The latter is a Mandaean expression showing that the community is under great stress. Sam Šitlan prays for help from the Mandaean "Life" (the primary principle and force in the World of Light), and he ends with the well-known formula, "Everything is fleeting, except prayer and praise."

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Here follows a sample of statements about Mandaeans in a few European books whose topics are not Mandaeism:

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[14] See chaps. 7 and 8 below.

[15] The colophons in texts belonging to Lamea Abbas Amara are treated in several chapters of this book.

[16] See her *Coronation of the Great Šišlam*, 37 n. 3.

A. Henry Layard, English traveler and archaeologist, in his *A Popular Account of Discoveries at Nineveh*, 1851, comments that the Mandaeans are "a remarkable tribe who reside in the province of Khuzistan and Susiana and in the districts near the mouth of the Euphrates, and who are probably the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Babylonia and Chaldaea."[17]

Stephen M. Longrigg, a historian of Iraq, speaks in his work *ʿIraq, 1900 to 1950: A Political, Social, and Economic History* of the populations in the border towns Badra and Mandali east of Baghdad. In this context, he mentions "the gentle, mysterious, scanty race of the ṣubba or Sabaeans, or, as they call themselves, Mandaeans. Known to travellers mistakenly as 'Christians of John the Baptist,' these folk, with their own Syriac-type language and their holy books in Mandaean tongue and script lived as silversmiths and boatbuilders in the riverain towns and villages of lower ʿIraq, wherever running water was available for their rites. Their origins and beliefs, neither Muslim nor Christian, and their distinctive ceremonies and customs had in 1900 been little studied."[18]

Wilfred Thesiger (d. 2003), the last in the tradition of great English travelers, describes the Mandaeans in his well-known book about the marsh dwellers of southern Iraq, *The Marsh Arabs*: "Distinguished by their large beards and their red-and-white check headcloths, there were a few thousand Sabaeans all told, most of them in Baghdad, Basra, Suq ash-Shuyuk and Amara where they are famous for their silver work. Isolated families lived in Moslem villages round the Marshes and farmyard ducks were a sign of their presence since, for some unaccountable reason, the Moslems would eat wild but not tame ducks."[19]

Jane F. Geniesse, the biographer of the English adventurer and traveller Freya Stark, in, *Passionate Nomad: The Life of Freya Stark*, speaking of Stark's friend, Lady E. S. Drower, states, "Mrs. Drower also studied the Mandaeans, or Sabaeans, a cult revering John the Baptist that was given to frequent and enthusiastic baptism ceremonies."[20]

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[17] p. 142, n. *.

[18] p. 10.

[19] p. 127.

[20] p. 96. For works giving information on the geographical locations of Mandaeans at various times, see Şinasi Gündüz, *The Knowledge of Life*, chaps. 2 and 5, with maps 1 and 2 (pp. 53–54); and Edmondo Lupieri, *The Mandaeans: The Last Gnostics*, chaps. 2 and 3, on the Mandaeans' interactions with European missionaries, diplomats, and travellers.

* * *

Lady E. S. Drower was the foremost field-worker among the Mandaeans, and she collected a great number of texts, many of which she translated and published for decades in the mid twentieth century. Much will be said of Drower's texts in what follows, and I could not have done my colophon research without the benefit of her enormous output in Mandaean studies.[21] Other texts that I have used are in private Mandaean ownership, some belong to university or museum manuscript collections, and yet others come from various scholarly editions and translations of Mandaean documents.

* * *

The arrangement of the material in my book aims to ease the reading of chapters focusing largely on what may seem like stultifying lists of names. Therefore, I also present chapters of a more narrative type. I begin with a section called "*Ginza* Matters." The first chapter in this part describes the contents of the Mandaean holy text, the *Ginza* ("treasure"); the second investigates the colophons in the four Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) *Ginza* manuscripts used by Mark Lidzbarski for his 1925 edition and translation of the *Ginza.* In the third chapter, I deal with the colophons in seven other *Ginza*s, and the fourth chapter I have entitled "Mandaic Adventures in the British Library."

Moving to the section "Priests and Scholars," I first describe a correspondence between Lady Drower and her primary Mandaean informant, Sheikh Negm. Next comes a chapter on the visit to Iraq by the German scholar Heinrich Petermann in 1854, and then a chapter focusing on his primary informant there: Yahia Bihram, the cholera survivor. A chapter on women priests follows.

The four chapters in section III, "More Texts," deal first with colophon matters in Mandaean liturgies; second with prayer no. 170 in *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*; third with colophons in several copies of *The Book of John*, and the last chapter here attempts to trace Mandaean scribal activities during the centuries between 700–1450. Finally, in the last part, chapter 13 makes an argument for the importance of the earliest colophons in reconstructing Mandaean history, while the next one pursues this argument in terms of the age of Mandaean traditions and texts. I conclude with a large chapter called “Matters of History.” Here I present a new combination of arguments—some old, some new—for the enduring question of the origins and early history of the Mandaeans. Some chapters have appendices. At the very end, I add freestanding appendices on Mandaean clan names, *malwašia* names, and a descriptive list of the documents in the Drower Collection in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

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[21] A brief account of Drower's life was given by her daughter, Margaret Hackforth-Jones, at the first international Mandaean conference at Harvard University in 1999 (see "The Life of Lady E. S. Drower").

PART 1: *GINZA* MATTERS

1 THE *GINZA* AND ITS CONTENTS

> Be silent, be silent, Adam! You, head of the entire tribe!
> We cannot prevent the world that is destined to come into being.
> Arise, arise! Pray to the Great one and subjugate yourself,
> so that Life may become your savior.
> Life may become your savior;
> And you may rise up and behold the Place of Light.
> May Life be victorious![1]

The *Ginza*, the main Mandaean text and holy book, is a hefty codex (xxvii plus 619 pages in Lidzbarski's edition), divided into the *Right Ginza* and *Left Ginza* (*GR* and *GL*, respectively). Upon reaching the end of the right side, one needs to turn the book upside down in order to find the left side, which starts at the opposite end. In all the *Ginza*s that I have seen (with one exception), the two sections are arranged in this manner. Perhaps this tradition arose in order to have the text resemble buried Mandaean inscribed bowls, which are often buried in pairs, one forming a lid on the other. In this way, the text does not escape but remains within its confines.

A conglomerate, the codex had certainly reached its final, collected form in the mid seventh century. At that time, according to the tradition, Mandaean authorities presented the book to Muslim leaders as proof that the Mandaeans had a holy book and therefore ought to be exempted from forced conversion to Islam. It is quite likely, however, that the various parts of the *Ginza* had already been collected, for internal, Mandaean purposes.[2] Therefore, the *Ginza* may not have been produced in order to appease Muslim authorities.

Taking his cue from the predominance of dualistic versus emanation patterns of Mandaean creation mythology and from the various terms for the Lightworld and its denizens, Kurt Rudolph long ago attempted to sift carefully the different strata of Mandaean literature, including the *Ginza*.[3] *GL* must have existed in the third century.[4] Since 1949, we have known that the Manichaean Thomas hymns are virtual translations of Mandaean originals from *GL*.[5] Of the eighteeen tractates making up *GR*, *GR* 1 and 2—which are versions of the same book—in particular contain very old traditions.

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[1] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, *GR* 16.2 (p. 388).

[2] See Rudolf Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 186, and the diverging opinion of Kurt Rudolph, "Die mandäische Literatur," 157.

The first useful *Ginza* to be published in the West was that of Heinrich Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*,[6] which still remains the only critical edition. Petermann's two volumes contain first a Latin translation and then Petermann's own writing of the entire *Ginza*, in Mandaic and *with* the colophons. Lidzbarski's introduction to his 1925 edition gives valuable information, including separate introductions to each *Ginza* tractate. But Lidzbarski did not include the colophons, and anyone wishing to work on the colophons in the four Paris manuscripts of the *Ginza* (the four are dubbed *Mss. A*, *B*, *C*, and *D*) must turn to the original manuscripts, or to Petermann.[7]

In this chapter, I briefly list the contents of each tractate of the *Ginza* and pay attention to where the colophons occur. Lidzbarski divided the *Ginza* into twenty-one tractates: eighteen tractates of *GR* and three of *GL*. In addition, he separated many of the tractates into smaller, numbered sections. He did this on the basis of formulaic expressions indicating the start of a new story or section. Another sign of divisions is the colophons, and one must note *where* they occur. There are seven colophons in each *Ginza*. The first one occurs after the segment *GR* 1–13, which must mean that this part was at some point considered to be *one* unit. Next, there is one colophon after each of the rest of the tractates of *GR*: 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18. These, too, must have been separate units. *GL* carries only one colophon, at the end.

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[3] See Kurt Rudolph, *Theogonie, Kosmogonie und Anthropogonie in den mandäischen Schriften*, esp. 339–48, and see also his chart, p. 78. For more recent comments, consult "Die mandäische Literatur," 157–59.

[4] See ibid., 158.

[5] This is the important contribution of Torgny Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic-Manichaean Psalm-Book*, esp. 137–63.

[6] Julius Heinrich Petermann, *The Great Treasure or Great Book. Commonly Called 'The Book of Adam' The Mandaeans' Work of Highest Authority. Thesaurus sive Liber Magnus, vulgo 'Liber Adamus' appellatus opus Mandaeorum summi ponderis: With a new Introduction by Charles Häberl*, 3 vols. Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias 2007. An international committee of Mandaeans and scholars is hoping to produce an English translation of the Ginza in a series planned by Brepols Publishers in Belgium, Corpus Fontium Mandaeorum.

[7] See chap. 2 below. For a comparison of the Paris *Ginza* colophons to colophons in seven other *Ginzas,* see chap. 3.

*GR*1-13[8] comprises, first, *GR* 1 and 2, which, as noted, are basically two versions of the same work.[9] *GR* 1 (pp. 5–30) constitutes one tractate, while *GR* 2's tractate has four sections.[10] The contents of the first one, *GR* 2.1, include: praises of the Lightworld, creation stories, the sending of moral teachings to Adam, revelations about history, end-of-the-world speculations, information about the world's four epochs, and polemics—especially anti-Christian materials. *GR* 2.2 is a confession of sins, while *GR* 2.3, in verse form, offers exhortations from the messenger of light. The fourth section of *GR* 2 contains teachings on marriage.

GR 3 (pp. 63–141), by far the largest of the *Ginza* tractates, is a vast, dramatic creation-myth, a conglomerate entitled "The Book of the Living, First Teachings." Various primordial emanations are described, and the chief savior figure, Manda d̲-Hiia ("Knowledge-of-Life") is instructed to descend from the Lightworld in order to prevent the soon-to-be creators, who scheme to construct the world, from committing stupid or fatal errors. Readers will find elaborate descriptions of the demonic Ruha and her planetary sons, of the creator Ptahil, and of Adam and his wife Hawwa. These are among the most prominent mythological figures.

The next *Ginza* tractate, *GR* 4, contains a fragmentary text about the *ʿutra (*Lightworld figure) Hibil's descent into the underworld (in *GR* 3, Manda d̲-Hiia performed this feat, not Hibil). Parts of the Mandaean liturgies are found in *GR* 4, such as the prayer *Canonical Prayerbook* (*CP*) 82 and also fragmentary versions of the investiture hymns *CP* 180–88.[11] These sections of the liturgies belong among the oldest parts of Mandaean literature.

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[8] Lidzbarski, *GR*, 3–287.

[9] This insight was first made by R. Reitzenstein, *Das mandäische Buch des Herrn der Grösse und die Evangelienüberlieferung.*

[10] *GR* 2 runs from pp. 31 to 62 in Lidzbarski's edition.

[11] The prayers are in E. S. Drower, *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*. For prayer no. 82 (i.e., *CP* 82), see Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 90. This prayer's first line (after the formula) is, "At the fountainhead I came forth," which has been corrected by Rudolf Macuch to "I went out to the waters." The expression is based on a Persian idiom (R. Macuch, pers. comm.). For details, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 7.

GR 5 (pp. 149–204) consists of five sections. The first one tells of Hibil's underworld journey[12] (it is related to the *GR* 4 tradition), and the second describes Manda d̲-Hiia's destruction of the demons. Its title is apt: "Destruction of all Idols of the House" (i.e., of the earthly world). Old Testament material appears here, including a twist on Psalm 114:4.[13] *GR* 5.3 deals with the soul's travels through the *maṭarata*s—the "toll-stations" on the way to the Light-world. Christ appears as one of the watchers here. In tractate *GR* 5.4, Manda d̲-Hiia is baptized by John the Baptist, while *GR* 5.5 shows a peculiar devaluation of the otherwise positively portrayed figure Šilmai.[14] Here, he is called "The Lord of the House" and is clearly a member of Ruha's coterie.[15]

GR 6's single section (pp. 206–12) contains the marvelous story of the Noah/Utnapishtim-like Dinanukht ("the one who speaks according to the religion"),[16] a human book who goes on a journey to the upper worlds.[17] The Syrian historian Theodor bar Koni refers to this text as belonging to the Dositheans.[18] *GR* 7 also has only one section, which consists of words of wisdom from John the Baptist. Most scholars have taken his appellation Yahia, the Arabic form of his name, to speak for the tractate's post-Islamic date. *GR* 8's sole section has Manda d̲-Hiia warning believers against Ruha.

GR 9 has two parts. The first one is "The Destruction of the Seven Stars,"[19] a polemical piece in which the planets are said to be the origin of the false religions. Here, Muhammad is equated with Nerig/Mars. The second tractate of *GR* 9 tells of "the young boy" created from the heavenly Jordan.[20] This section contains the concept of "the only-begotten son/the sole son," for which one might duly note Lidzbarki's references.[21] The single but composite tractate making up *GR* 10 is a creation story entitled "The Book of the Radiance that Shines in the *Pihta*."[22]

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[12] See my *Mandaeans*, chap. 4.

[13] Lidzbarski calls this a "misunderstanding" (177). I am not at all convinced—it seems like polemics (see my *Mandaeans*, chaps. 4, 5, and 13. For a very thorough study, see Dan Shapira, "*Iazuqaiia*, Zoroastrians, Manichaeans and Other Heretics in Mandaean Texts."

[14] Usually, he is a Lightworld personage, one of the Jordan witnesses.

[15] For the so-called "evil spirit" Ruha, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 4.

[16] In Avestan/Pahlavi; see Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 205. See also E. S. Drower and Rudolf Macuch, *A Mandaic Dictionary* (*MD*), 108b, s.v. *dinanukht*.

[17] For treatment of the first part of this tractate, see also, my *Mandaeans*, chap. 4, on Ruha.

[18] See, for instance, Kurt Rudolph's translation of bar Koni's text in *Die Mandäer*, 1:259.

[19] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 223, suggests that the text belongs to the eighth century.

[20] See ibid., p. 235, for references to the possibly Egyptian or Orphic affinities of this document.

The title of *GR* 11 (pp. 250–68), "The Mystery and the Book of the Great Anuš," would suit *GR* 12 better, says Lidzbarski.[23] The text shows grammatical peculiarities, and Lidzbarski thinks that it stems from a different tradition than the other *Ginza* texts.[24] It contains a creation story featuring Ruha and the planets battling the forces of the Lightworld. *GR* 12 has seven sections. Among these, one may note that in the first, the *ʿutra* Anuš is the speaker, while sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 are alphabetic hymns.[25] Of these, *GR* 12.4 is identical to the Mandaean prayer *CP* 214, which belongs among the hymns for a new priest and for marriage.[26] *GR* 12.6 describes the world of evil and its king—a counter-piece to *GR* 12.1, as I see it. The last part, *GR* 12.7, is connected to the first one in *GR* 12: it deals with north as the sacred direction and with the cosmic ocean. Finally, *GR* 13 (pp. 283–87) is a priestly exhortatory prayer for the community.

There is no doubt that *GR* 1–13 alone testifies to a fully developed Mandaean Gnosticism. Most of the religion's chief literary genres are present, in prose and poetry: moral teachings, creation myths, polemics, liturgy, sapiental traditions, etc. I would especially emphasize that the first thirteen books at the very least presuppose large parts of the liturgies as found in *CP*. Thus, it might be possible to argue for the primacy of *CP* and other hymnic materials.[27]

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[21] Ibid.

[22] The ritual, sacred bread, a biscuit-like wafer.

[23] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 250. (Anuš is one of the *ʿutra*s).

[24] See ibid., n. 71, and compare with Lidzbarski's statements about *GR* 6, p. 205).

[25] An alphabetic hymn is based on the acrostic principle: the first word in the first line starts with the letter A, the first word in the second line with B, etc., until the end of the alphabet. The Mandaean alphabet, the *abagada*, has twenty-four letters, a magically auspicious number; the A is repeated at the end. For the *abagada* and Mandaean plays on words, sounds, and letters, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 13.

[26] See Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 183–84.

[27] In my studies of Mandaean rituals, I take as my continuous lodestar Lidzbarski's statement to the effect that the Mandaean hymns and prayers are primary, composed in the most ancient times. Lidzbarski stresses that the liturgies find their natural domain in the cult (Lidzbarski, Introduction to the *Ginza*, p. xii).

GR 1–13 is followed by *GR*'s first colophon, which, like other first *GR* colophons, ends with the Jewish-named copyist Ram Šilai.[28] In the oldest Paris *Ginza*, *Ms. A*, the colophon after the first thirteen tractates carries a strikingly long postscript, which I shall present and deal with in chapter 2. Neither here, at the end of *GR* 13, nor elsewhere does Lidzbarski offer any thoughts on the importance of the *Ginza* colophons, whether for historical, tradition-critical, or other reasons.

GR 14 (pp. 288–94), after which colophon 2 appears, is called "The Book of the Great Nbaṭ," seemingly named for the Light-world being. The *ʿutra*s Yawar and Yušamin originate from him. The book shows the same grammatical oddities as *GR* 11, but its content demonstrates affinities with *GR* 3.

Twenty pieces of poetry make up *GR* 15 (pp. 295–379), in which a revealer delivers speeches and exhortations. *GR* 16 contains eleven poems, parts of which also occur in the *GR* liturgies and in *The Book of John* [hereafter *JB*].[29] *GR* 16 is closely related to *GR* 15; some of the hymns in it are of "unusual beauty," says Lidzbarski.[30] Conflated traditions seem to be at work in *GR* 17, which has two sections of poetry. The speakers are the personified Mana ("vessel," "matrix"), the Great Life (the supreme Lightworld being), and the Lord of Greatness.[31]

An apocalyptic world-history is presented in *GR* 18 (pp. 405– 19). According to this text, the world is 480,000 years old, and the book accounts for the span of time from the beginning of the world to the coming of the Arabs. *GR* 18 contains information about the four world-epochs and it has Old Testament materials, including the Exodus from Egypt, with a Mandaean twist as one might expect. Political and religious prophecies figure prominently in this work. Lidzbarski dates the text to the mid seventh century,[32] though *GR* 18 specifies that the Arabs have been in power for seventy-one years. However, the text includes among the Arab kings the last of the Sassanid rulers. *GR* 18 needs a thorough re-examination, due to its historical significance and, not the least, for comparative purposes.[33]

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[28] See chaps. 2, 3, and 4 below.

[29] Mark Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer*. For *JB* colophons, see chap. 11 below.

[30] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 380.

[31] The Lord of Greatness is the Supreme Being, according to one of the Mandaean cosmogony traditions.

[32] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 407.

Now, as noted, one must turn the book around 180 degrees in order to find the beginning of *GL*. This part of the codex concentrates on the fate of the soul after the death of the body.[34] It consists of three tractates, the first of which has four sections. The prose piece *GL* 1.1 (pp. 423–29) tells the wondrous story of the first man to die, Adam's son Šitil.[34] The next section centers on Adam's complaint at the announcement of his[35] death and on his ascent; the third warns against mourning for the dead and describes Hawa's death; and the fourth describes the tollhouses, the *maṭaratas*, testing the soul on its path from earth to Lightworld.

GL 2 (pp. 454–504) has twenty-eight sections of poetry. Here, the personified Mana speaks, beginning each piece with the formulaic "I am a Mana of the Great Life." Finally, sixty-two poems comprise *GL* 3 (pp. 505–96). These deal with the destiny of the soul. Long prayers alternate with shorter ones, and Lidzbarski thinks that this arrangement indicates a call-and-response format.[36]

Indeed, several of the prayers belong to the category *ʿnianas* ("responses"). Below, I have correlated eight of the *GL* 3 poems with those in Lidzbarski's edition of the Mandaean liturgical collections.[37] Seven of these (though *GL* 3.5 remains uncertain) can be equated with Drower's full collection of prayers in *CP*. A correlation of the parallel prayers in *GL* 3, *Mand. Lit.*, and *CP* yields the following:

GL 3.	*Mand. Lit.*, p.	*CP* no.
2	161	96
3	159	94
4	157	92
5	158	?

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[33] Dan Y. Shapira, "On Kings and on the Last Days in Seventh Century Iraq. A Mandaean Text and its Parallels" (unpublished).

[34] Even the first printed Mandaic *Ginza*, produced by Mandaeans residing in Australia, possesses this traditional feature (see M. F. Mubaraki, R. H. M. Saeed, and B. Mubaraki, eds., *Ginza Rba*). In terms of sheer size, this *Ginza* is even larger than Lidzbarski's translated edition. A still heftier one is the *Ginza* catalogued as *Hunt. 6* in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (see chap. 3 below).

[35] See my *Mandaeans*, chap. 3.

[36] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 505.

[37] Lidzbarski, *Mandäische Liturgien*.

7	163	98
20	99	68
27	111	73
43	96	66

Of these, four are *ʿniana*s (*CP* 96, 94, 92, and 98), two are *masiqta* ("death mass") hymns (*CP* 68 and 66), and one, *CP* 73, is an oil-prayer. The three last-mentioned prayers belong to the first of the eight colophons in *CP*.[38] *GL*'s colophon stretches far back in time, to around the year 200, as we shall see.[39] It is possible that *GL* precedes *CP* with respect to three segments: *GL* 3.20, 3.27, and 3.43. In all likelihood, *GL* is much older than the parts of *CP* whose colophons do not stretch back to the third century.

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It is time to turn to the first examination of one set of colophons. As my first example, I choose the colophons of the four Paris *Ginzas*, those used by Petermann and Lidzbarski.

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[38] See chap. 9 below.

[39] See chaps. 2, 3, 13, and 14 below.

2 THE COLOPHONS IN FOUR PARIS *GINZAS*

As noted, each of the four Paris *Ginza*s contains seven colophons, twenty-eight in all. Considering that a given colophon might contain between one hundred and two hundred names, it is perhaps understandable that Lidzbarski, in his *Ginza* edition and translation, would choose to omit these lengthy lists of names. But we have those of Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*.

I shall not deal with each of the twenty-eight colophons in equal measure, as to do so would expand the chapter far beyond the bounds of the present project. Using the colophons in *Ms. A* as a main pattern for the others, I deal with the next three in turn: *Mss. B*, *C*, and *D*. The following issues are especially important: the copyists themselves, their geographical settings, and other information gleaned from the scribes' postscripts; similarities and differences in the correlation of lineages in the seven colophons in each manuscript; prevalent copyist lineages throughout the colophons; specific luminaries in Mandaean priestly history; and the presence of women's names. After treating each of the four codices' colophons, I give a very short conclusion. An appendix to this chapter contains the full translation of two of the Paris *Ginza* colophons: colophons 1 and 7 from *Ms. A*. For the sake of brevity, I limit myself to these (attention is paid to other *Ginza* colophons, in whole or in part, in chaps. 3 and 4).

Ms. A comes from the *tarmida* (lower-ranking priest) Ram Baktiar, son of Bihram Šadan, of the Quṭana family, who finished copying the *Ginza* in 1560 CE (AH 968) in the village Maqdam belonging to the greater town and district of Huwaiza, in the province of Khuzistan, Iran. Huwaiza is on the Karka river, northwest of Ahwaz. Ram Baktiar also copied the illustrated scroll *Diwan Abatur*, published by Julius Euting,[1] and Ram Baktiar appears as scribe in the Mandaean astrological text *Sfar Malwašia*.

Ms. B's copyist is Baktiar Bulbul (*bulbul*: "nightingale"), son of Ram Ziwa, of the Ram Ziwa family. Baktiar Bulbul is a *ganzibra* (higher-ranking priest), who finished his task in 1632 CE (AH 1042), also in Maqdam—though he seems to have begun his copying work in Basra, Iraq. He appears as a copyist of *Ms. D* and of *JB*. So far in my studies, I have found him nowhere else. *Ms. C* was copied by Yahia Adam, son of Baktiar Bulbul (Ram Ziwa clan). The initiator is, as we have just seen, the copyist of *Ms. B*. Yahia Adam seems to be a *ganzibra* in Huwaiza, and the date of *Ms. C*'s copying is 1680 CE (AH 1091). Note that forty-eight years separate the two documents *Mss. B* and *C*. Finally, *Ms. D*'s copyist, Yahia Bihram, son of Adam—of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans—is evidently a *tarmida* and more difficult to pinpoint. He copied the text on the channel Šamaʿnia, near Basra. The date is partially erased, and one can only discern "11…," which, based on the colophon's information about contemporaneous rulers, puts the text somewhere in the early 1700s.[2]

Ms. A

When he begins to copy the *Ginza*, Ram Baktiar offers the traditional invocation, giving the names of his parents, wife, siblings, children, nephews, and nieces. He asks for the forgiveness of sins for all of these and for himself. We learn that Ram Baktiar's own father is, indeed, his initiator, Bihram Šadan.[3] Ram Baktiar's first colophon reveals that he copied the text for his own salvific benefit, transcribing from a book belonging to Yahia Mhatam, the *riš ama*, "head of the people," in Maqdam. The copyist's formula, the words with which he starts the colophon, is:

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[1] Julius Euting, *Mandäischer Diwan*. The manuscript is in the Vatican Library. See also E. S. Drower's edition and translation, *Diwan Abatur; or, Progress through the Purgatories*.

[2] But Yahia Bihram turns up below, in chap. 4, where we will find a precise date for his copying of another text. Mandaean years are given according to the Arab calendar, usually with the curse/pun: "according to the time-computation of the Arabs—may the world founder upon them!" This plays on the noun "Arabs," *arbaiia*, against the verb "to fall" or "to founder," *ARB*.

[3] This is not an automatic relationship, as noted in the Introduction above.

> (Then) I concluded this book and the *zharas*[4] which I copied for myself—(I am) small among my brethren *tarmidas* and a slave among the *naṣuraiia*.[5] I am Ram Baktiar, son of Bihram Šadan, son of Yahia Maimun, son of Adam Yahia …[6]

Stating that he copied from the book belonging to Yahia Mhatam, Ram Baktiar then gives Yahia Mhatam's lineage, and next that of the previous copyist, and so on until the end of the colophon. The very last copyist, Ram Šilai, son of Daimir, bears a Jewish name.[7] At Ram Šilai's name the text says that this copyist copied "from the first fathers."[8] Based on the datability of Ram Šilai's immediate successors, ʿQaiam, son of Zindana,[9] and his grandson, the ubiquitous Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar,[10] I would put Ram Šilai in or before the middle of the seventh century. Note that this colophon ends centuries before the earliest datable Mandaean scribe, Zazai of Gawazta, who flourished around 270 CE.[11]

Among the luminaries appearing in Ram Baktiar's first colophon are: the ethnarch Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad; the master Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia; and Bayan Hibil's two sons/initiates, Šaiar and Sam Ziwa. The second name—the master Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia—is very well attested, for he had his manuscript copied by many scribes. Frequent copying back and forth, within generations as well as across generation lines, makes it difficult to operate with a strict, linear calculation of "generations" of scribes.[12] For instance, Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, appears three times in colophon 1, as does Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. Repetitions of certain names seldom demonstrate errors in copying; rather, men such as Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, possessed reliable, frequently copied texts. And they may have owned more than one copy of a given text.

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[4] *Zharas* are name-insertions (literally; "warnings"), very common in Mandaean documents, especially prayers and formulas. This device allows the tailoring of a text so that it mentions, in the proper places, the name of the person for whom the text is being transcribed, a prayer is uttered, or a ritual is performed.

[5] The term for learned Mandaeans, mainly the priestly class.

[6] Petermann, p. 290. See the Appendix at the end of this chapter for the continuation of Ram Baktiar's lineage and for colophon 1 in its entirety.

[7] See *MD*, 462a.

[8] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 2:291.

[9] In my "The Colophons in H. Petermann's *Sidra Rabba*," 24 and 36 n. 71, I thought that Zindana was a female name. This is not correct.

[10] More information on Bayan Hibil appears elsewhere below, e.g., in chaps. 9, 10, and 13.

[11] However, as we shall see, *GL* has scribes earlier than Zazai.

[12] I calculate one generation as thirty years. When the word "generation" appears in quotation marks, it means a scribal generation, which may not always coincide with a biological one.

So, "copying in circles"—that is, copying back and forth within the same time period or in the same generation—is a complex affair, as exemplified by Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia. At one point he copies from his own book, and therefore we know that at least two of his *Ginza*s existed (whether he owned both is a different question—he may be doing the second one for a client). Further on in the colophon, we learn that Adam, son of Ram Gadana, copied from one of Yahia's books, and so does the next copyist in line. These may not be the same books, and it is difficult to tell how many *Ginza*s Yahia did own and transcribe.

Hibil Yuhana, son of Šitil, copies from Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad—and vice versa. Bayan, son of Yahia Diqnana, also copies from Anuš Maiʿlia, son of Anuš Bihdad. Such repeated appearances indicate trusted copies by reliable men. If someone's scribal capacities were famous, it would be natural to seek out that book in order to make several copies of it.[13]

A technical note: the term for the *Ginza* in Ram Baktiar's first colophon is *sidra* ("book") throughout—except for the very end, where it is *kdaba ʿda*: "manuscript." This means that *if* the thirteen books comprising *GR* existed in separate scroll, *šapta*, form, this was no longer the case even when Ram Šilai copied the text "from the first fathers."

The second *Ginza* colophon, appearing after *GR* 14, differs only in very limited ways from the previous one. When the colophon reaches ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, however, it turns in a new direction. Instead of listing Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar—and then, for a second time, ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, and ending with Ram Šilai (as colophon 1 did)—this colophon names another of Bayan Hibil's pupils, Ram Ziwa Bihram, as the predecessor to Šaiar (Šaiar, son of Bayan Hibil, was mentioned among the luminaries above). This colophon ends right afterward, with three of Brik Yawar's initiates: Šadan, Banan, and Bihram. Together, these three were responsible for the earliest known copy of *GR* 14. We now know that Brik Yawar had at least these three other initiates besides Bayan Hibil. Like *GR* 13, *GR* 14 is called "*sidra*" throughout the colophon. But, unlike *GR*

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[13] An example of a copyist not *having*, but *using* seven copies for scrutinizing, consultation, and correlation, is Nukraia, son of Šitil in the first *CP* colophon; see chap. 9 below.

13's colophon, this one does not end with Ram Šilai, but with Brik Yawar's three initiates. We shall see that Ram Šilai is the last copyist in colophon 1 in all of the examined *Ginza*s (though his name is sometimes garbled).

Colophon 3, after *GR* 15, mostly follows the two others, but it ends with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. There are new links between him and his immediate successors. For example, a woman copyist, Hawa, daughter of Nukraia, appears two "generations" later than ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. This Hawa appears only in *GR*. Three copyist links removed from Hawa comes Haiašum, son of Ska (more often called "Sku") Hiia. Ska Hiia is known from his *JB* context; he is the last copyist of nearly all *JB* colophons that I have seen. But I have not yet encountered him as copyist of other documents.

Ram Baktiar's colophon after *GR* 16 ends with Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, does not appear in this colophon at all. A new woman, Hawa, daughter of Yahia (alternatively: Yuhana), shows up five scribal slots removed from Anuš Maʿilia. Hawa copied from one of Anuš Maʿilia's pupils. She turns up elsewhere in *GR*, and a particular verb is used consistently about her: *maknušta*[14] ("gathered" or "assembled"). The phrase here is "Bayan, son of Adam Šuparṭaiia, from the book that Hawa, daughter of Yahia, son of Zakia, gathered."[15] Does this mean that Hawa performed a particular editing task on the sixteen sections of poetry that make up *GR* 16? So it seems.

The verb *maknušta* is repeated, erroneously—in feminine form!—in connection with a male copyist of *GR* 16,

> Sam Hibil, son of Adam, assembled it with the help of Yuhana Sarwan, son of Anuš Hibil Sukia and Yahia Yuhana Bihram, son of Anuš Bihdad, who copied it from his own book, which he copied from his father, Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad.[16]

And Anuš Maʿilia's copy, finally, came

> from an ancient book that was housed with him, and the copy of these books and teaching was to here. And what was copied did not reach further, and the copy was old and there was no more.[17]

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[14] From the root *KNŠ*, see *MD*, 220a.

[15] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 372.

[16] Ibid. This is unclear: Anuš Maʿilia is the biological father of at least one of these copyists, Yahia Yuhana Bihram, but he is not the initiator of any of them.

[17] Ibid.

These kinds of near-formulaic statements are quite common, especially in *Ginza* colophons. They reassure the reader that the copyist has not cut off or otherwise altered the document. From other colophons we know that there were incidents of the illegal practice of cutting off lists of copyists and gluing these lists onto a copyist's own, freshly copied document in order to save time and effort. But this practice is a form of theft.[18]

Like colophon 4, colophon 5 is markedly shorter than the first three. It ends with Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan, four scribal generations before Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. The two colophons, 4 and 5, are very similar, but the latter takes a different tack between Hawa, daughter of Yahia (alternatively: Yuhana), and Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. Other scribal links appear between these two in this colophon, and the information about Hawa as assembler of *GR* 17 (as she was of *GR* 16) shows up here, too, and the same verb is used of her. The copy of *GR* 17 is an excellent copy, according to the colophon's final statement.

The colophon after *GR* 18 presents new data. Yahia Mhatam, from whose book Ram Baktiar copied, is said to be "head of the Mandaeans and head of the tribunals (*dinaiia*),"[19] which probably indicates his role as representing the Mandaeans in legal matters involving Muslim authorities. He may also be the head of a tribunal dealing with internal matters of Mandaean religious law.

Two brothers appear in this lineage: the younger one is Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun; the elder is Adam Bihram, son of Zakia Mašhadia.[20] One notes that they have different initiators. This practice, which is not uncommon, may very well indicate the intentional forging of close relations with different clans, much as marriages would. Together, the two brothers copied from two books, one of which belonged to "the pious Hibil BrHiia" from the town of Garzana.[21] This pious man, in turn, copied from "the king of the Naṣuraiia," Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, who is now becoming familiar to us as a frequently encountered copyist. He is a well-known copyist of other *Ginza*s, of one *JB*, and of *Diwan Abatur*.[22]

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[18] For examples of cut-off colophons, see below in this chapter regarding *GL* in *Ms. D*, and also one of the *Ginza*s treated in chap. 3.

[19] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 394; for *dina*, see *MD*, 108a.

[20] This name, "from Mašhad," probably means that Zakia once went to this famous Persian shrine-city, not that he came from there. The city is far from familiar Mandaean territories. Adam's name wavers.

[21] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 394. The location of this town remains unknown to me (*MD*, 78b, only says "a city").

The woman Hawa, daughter of Yahia, son of Zakia, reappears, with the same verb as noted regarding *GR* 16 and 17. In more ancient times than Hawa's, another woman copyist turns up: Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, son of Anuš, son of Bihram Šitil.[23] The colophon ends, as did the previous one, with Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. But his immediate successor is different than in *GR* 17's colophon, and this colophon has fewer links between the earliest copyist, Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan, and Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia. Notably, Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, does not appear here.

A long postscript by *Ms. A*'s scribe appears after *GR* 18's colophon, and this merits special attention. No other colophon in any of the Paris *Ginza*s has a postscript of this size. It presents many difficulties for a translator, but I attempt a full translation of it here.[24] Additions in brackets and parentheses are my own, for the purpose of clarification. Other additions and clarifications are in footnotes.

> Again, I brought in order and successfully concluded this book in the name of the First Life and in the name of Yawar Manda d-Hiia and in the confidence of the elevated King of Light and in the names of Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš—the head of the entire generation; in the name[25] of Yawar Ziwa, in their names—on the day of Saturday, the fourteenth of the month Parwanaiia, in the year (that began) on a Habšaba [i.e., Sunday], the year 968 according to the reckoning of the Arabs of the age, in the village Maqdam by the waters of Karka in the region of Huwaiza.[26]
>
> Now, there is a Sultan in the lands: Saiid, Sultan Sušad, son of Sultan[27] Badran, son of Sultan Palah, son of Sultan Musin, son of Mhamad, of the Mahdiia—the Lord of the time.[28] May the Precious Light protect

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[22] See reference in n. 1 above.

[23] Here (and elsewhere) I note that the verb "copied" when used of women is almost never put in the correct feminine form. It seems that the power of the predominantly masculine form of the verb overshadows the feminine form when such indeed is called for.

[24] I am grateful to the late Professor Rudolf Macuch for help in deciphering some of the problems in this postscript (for the text, see Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 395).

[25] "Name" is repeated.

[26] Spelled: "Hiuaza."

[27] "Son" is inserted, obviously erroneously.

[28] See *MD*, 159b and 385b.

him! For we had access to him and support and respect, and we had a legal religion, and ?[29] And he did not overpower us, our root [i.e., religion]; he did not overpower it, upon my Lord!

He had two residences: one for summer, by Huwaiza, and one for winter, by Abadan, in Maškuk.[30] There are many towns by the Karka, and the Stem of Souls [i.e., Mandaeans] are in them, and there are *tarmida*s and *ganzibra*s in them. There is a treasured *ganzibra rbai*[31] Ram, son of R. Adam Manduia. There is another *ganzibra*—blessed in *naṣiruta*: ("priestly wisdom") R. Ram Kuhailia. And there is a *maškna* [cult hut] in the district (*bšauir*)[32] in the town of Kaṣian.[33] And the governor of Maškuk, Salama, son of Gamar Gasal, (was) appointed by the governor Sušad. There is another governor in Maqdam, Husaiin Dinar, appointed by his father-in-law, governor Ahšad.[34] And the rulers fomented a rebellion (against) the lords of the kingdom.[35]

And he sent to him sharp words and warnings from the governor, and the governor of Maškuk rose up and dismissed Emir Salama so that he [i.e., Salama] came to them in anger and killed them—the evil ones and liars! And he calmed the world, and appeased (them?), and the world quieted down. And they did not lock the gates.[36]

Again, the governor lived in Maqdam, Salama, the governor Alad (?). The evil ones and the liars took to the depths of the earth.[37] Sulaiman, son of Dauud,[38] is governor over me— we are poor and witnesses!—

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[29] Unclear.

[30] For the phrase, see *MD*, 18b. *MD*, 446b, has Maškun for Maškuk, but the former must be wrong.

[31] Literally: "my teacher" (hereafter I indicate the priestly title through the capital R).

[32] The word stems from the Persian *shahr*, according to a suggestion by Professor John E. Woods (Chicago). I thank him for this information. *MD*, 440b, says that the word means "district."

[33] *MD*, 200b, has *kasaian* (variant of Kaṣian?) as a name of a town.

[34] Not clear. "Father-in-law" is dubious. The sentence may rather be: "Husain Dinar was also appointed by governor Ahšad." If so, how is the latter governor?

[35] Dubious, again. The writer is punning, using wordplay: "*mulk mikul ṭauiaip*," "the Kings from all the factions."

[36] Evidently, the kind governor Salmana repelled the rebels, protected the Mandaeans, and lifted a curfew (imposed on religious minorities?).

[37] This sentence is a recurrent Mandaean phrase, known from mythological descriptions of the (temporary) quelling of evil forces.

[38] The writer compares his own friendly governor to the wise King Solomon, who banished the demons to the underworld.

Slama[39] Sulaiman! May the Precious Light protect him and the lords (and) his work and his child from all that is evil!

And they [i.e., the Mandaeans] hope again to have a *bimanda*[40] in Maqdam, and there is our precious *ganzibra*, R. Yahia, son of Zihrun Manduia. And again, we have a distinguished head, a son of a steadfast root, son of an exalted family; he is the head of all Mandaeans and the head of all families, he is a trusted craftsman. May his name be magnified! His name is Yahia Mhatam, son of Anuš, son of Zihrun, son of Zakia, son of Manṣur ʿUbadia, son of Paraš, son of Yahia, son of Naṣir, son of R. Yahia, son of Anuš, *kiniana* name: son of Danqa, and *laqab* name:[41] Šapaia. May Manda d̲-Hiia forgive him his sins, and may he be guarded in the Precious Light!—his (sins), and (those of) his brother and sons, his house and family and generation, for he has confidence in *naṣiruta* and he has much learning!

And brothers and sons and uncles and great and small children learn *naṣiruta* that is in the treasures [i.e., books]. For the mysteries of Light are in them in abundance, and they [i.e., those who learn] clothe themselves in *naṣiruta*. Again, our head is Yahia Mhatam; he is very learned, respecting the Sunday and the Day of Judgment and he establishes helpers and *tarmida*s. There are plentiful good things for all the people. Again, there is respect and honor and faithfulness, and there is the love of the faithful and the helpers.

Again, (there is) a share, a third of the offering from the arrangement (*ṣadarata*) of Panšaiia for "the Parents."[42] And say, "May there be an offering to the *yardna* ["Jordan", i.e., flowing water] for the *tarmidas*!"[43] He brings it. And (say), "I broke off from the offering." And may not my Lord say: "Be turned back!" May there be a portion for Life, my Parents! Seek and find the portion in the worlds of Light, unto Life, the Parents, and may there be abundance in abundance! And (for) him and his family and tribe forever and ever! May Life be a helper for him!

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[39] Pun, again: *S* for *Š*: *šlama* means "peaceful."

[40] This is a name for the Mandaean cult hut.

[41] The two terms *kiniana* and *laqab* mean "family/clan name." Of these, *kiniana* is the more important, the *laqab* name secondary, according to information from modern Mandaeans.

[42] This sentence refers to the ritual foods offered during the five-day intercalary period, *Parwanaiia* (colloquially *Panja*, but here it is spelled in a more "modern" manner). A *masiqta*, "death-mass," for the ancestors, "the Parents," is celebrated at that time (see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 8).

[43] What follows are set phrases and directions for ritual words and acts regarding the *masiqta* at Panja.

We learn here that Yahia Mhatam, son of Anuš (of the Bar Danqa and Šapaia families), from whose book Ram Baktiar copied *GR*, was not only a priest but "the head of all Mandaeans." The time of writing must have been a period of unusual peace and prosperity for the Mandaeans at Maqdam, thanks to the governor Salama. Like his namesake Solomon, son of David, Salama kept the threatening rulers at bay and protected the Mandaeans. City gates were not locked, which I take to mean that in more dangerous times, religious minorities had to observe curfew. Blessings on rulers are very uncommon in Mandaean texts, and the optimistic tone here is precious indeed. Apart from the threat posed by the two vanquished rebels, the picture Ram Baktiar presents is almost idyllic: the people hope for another cult hut, and they are enjoying safety in learning and in observing their religion.

Their savior-like ruler, Sayyid Sajjad, belonged to the powerful Mushaʿshaʿ dynasty centered in Huwaiza. A tradition of Shiʿi extremism hovered over the Mushaʿshaʿ. Mystical traditions seem to have fused with political force, producing a tolerant attitude of letting other mystics or Gnostics be. Geographically removed from the centers Tabriz and Baghdad, the Mushaʿshaʿ experimented with expansion of their power base. Under Sayyid, the dynasty moved closer to the Ottomans, probably under pressure from the Baghdad governor, Ali Paša. He sent a military force to Huwaiza in 1584, the death-year of Sayyid, twenty-four years after the colophon.[44]

In the seventeenth century, Safavid and Ottoman lines of power move back and forth, dividing what is present-day Iraq. Earlier, in 1560, the year of Ram Baktiar's copyist activity, the Persian area of influence seems to have extended quite far to the west. But in 1630 (relevant to *Ms. B*), the situation is different: the dividing line between Ottomans and Safavids goes straight through Iraq, from north to south.[45] The relatively peaceful political climate of tolerance for the Mandaeans in 1560, the mood of *Ms. A*, differs from the testimonies in other Paris *Ginza*s, as we shall see.

Now, turning to *GL*, we see that at the beginning, colophon 7 (given in the appendix to the present chapter) follows the others in *Ms. A*, especially colophon 1. One notable, new addition is that Bayan Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, copied from a book that he had copied for his older brother, Yuhana, son of Adam Bayan. Note that these brothers had the same initiator. The ubiquitous Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, shows up again in his expected spot, and the colophon now moves back and forth between colophon 1's copyists and new ones until we reach Zakria, son of Hibil.

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[44] For this and other information and references regarding the named Muslim rulers in the *Ginza* colophons, I am indebted to John E. Woods for directing me to Paul Luft's article on the Mushaʿshaʿs in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, and to M. M. Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safavids*, esp. 67–71.

[45] See map in Bachrach, *Near East Studies Handbook*, 67.

From there on, colophon 7 diverges from colophon 1 and becomes quite extensive. It has many women's names and ends with an unnamed man and his daughter, a woman known only from *GL* colophons: Šlama, daughter of Qidra.[46] Both are women's names. The only copyists that the earliest part of colophon 7 has in common with colophon 1 are the famous Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar,[47] and ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. (As noted, the last copyist of *GR*, Ram Šilai, son of Daimir, does not appear here at all). Who, then, did ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, copy from here in colophon 7? The answer is: from a woman named Miriai, daughter of Simat (both are women's names). The question is whether these two women copyists, Šlama and Miriai, are indicated with *maṣbuta* names (i.e., in relation to their biological mothers) or whether we are dealing with female initiators in this context.

Siginficantly, at this point in the colophon, at Miriai's name, the copied text is no longer called *sidra*, "book," but *šapta*, "scroll." In this case, it seems to point to an older format of the text. It is worth keeping in mind that much of *GL* consists of poetry, and there may have been a somewhat open-ended character to *GL* in the early stages of the collection. All the copyists before ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, are new, and they appear nowhere else in *GL* that I have yet seen. Starting with Miriai, daughter of Simat, there are twelve other lineages before the colophon ends. Zazai d̲-Gawazta, the copyist datable to the 270s, does not appear as copyist in his own right, but only as father of Ṭabia, who is the fourth copyist. So, this colophon goes beyond Zazai, and one may place the earliest named copyist, Šlama, around the year 200. As its penultimate copyist, the colophon has Yuzaṭaq, son of Sasa, who copied from "a *šapta* of the father of Šlama, daughter of Qidra."[48] It is interesting that the father remains nameless, but his daughter has the distinction of being the last named person in *Ms. A*'s *GL* colophon.

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[46] The name "Qidra" means "cooking-pot" (see *MD*, 410b). *MD* does not give this as a personal name, but it is clear from the context that Qidra is the mother's/initiator's name.

[47] Again, he is a very important man in Mandaean history. See Macuch, "Anfänge," 182, and chaps. 9, 10, and 13 below.

[48] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 138.

Finally, Ram Baktiar adds a postscript listing his relatives. He begins by commending the first copyists, who "were in the spirit of Life for the believers who came forth from their building [i.e., religious community] and mine, Ram Baktiar, son of Hawa Mudalal. And (of) my father Bihram Šadan, son of Šadia Kisna …"[49]

Ms. B

Seventy-two years after Ram Baktiar copied *Ms. A*, the *ganzibra* Baktiar Bulbul, son of Ram Ziwa, of the Ram Ziwa clan, copied *Ms. B*, concluding it in 1632 CE (AH 1042), also in Maqdam. It seems that the manuscript came from Basra, but that Baktiar Bulbul finished his work in Maqdam. This copyist also appears fairly early on in the *JB* manuscript *Hunt 71*.[50] Otherwise, I have so far found him only in *Ginza Ms. B*. His son, however, is Yahia Adam, the copyist of *Ms. C*, as we shall see. Comparing *Mss. B* and *C*, one sees that about eight "generations" before the present copyist, *Ms. B* links up with *Ms. A*. For with the scribe Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, *Ms. B* begins to follow *Ms. A* precisely to the end. This scribe, Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, will become a familiar one as this book proceeds, as will his son-in-law Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram. Using the manuscript of his own father/initiator, Baktiar Bulbul copies for the salvific benefit of a craftsman named Saʿdan, son of Yahia Baktiar.

In colophons 2 and 6, Baktiar Bulbul reveals that Saʿdan's baptismal (*maṣbuta*) name is Adam Zihrun.[51] Colophon 2 follows closely that of *Ms. A*, linking up with it in the same place as *Ms. B*'s first colophon, at Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. Like *Ms. A*'s second colophon, it ends with Brik Yawar. *Ms. B*'s third colophon follows its equivalent in *Ms. A*, ending with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Colophon 4, after *GR* 16, also follows *Ms. A* closely and has, like it, Hawa, daughter of Yuhana, as collector (the same verb is used of her as in *Ms. A*). Also, the postscripts in the two colophons are identical—that is, offering the assurance that the manuscript was old, not altered or cut off. Colophon 5 follows the previous one and coheres with *Ms. A*.

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[49] Ibid. As noted, it is common practice to give the *maṣbuta* (i.e., baptismal) name in these formulas, not the name used in initiation relationships.

[50] The three copies of *JB* in Biblioheque Nationale are *Mss. A*, *B*, and *C*. They must not be confused with the *Ginza*s of the same identifications! The fourth *JB* manuscript is *Hunt. 71* in the Bodleian Library, and Lidzbarski calls it "*Ms. D*," but I will refer to it as *Hunt. 71*.

[51] Saʿdan, alias Adam Zihrun, is identical to a craftsman named Bulbul in *JB*'s *Mss. A* and *B*.

In the sixth colophon there are small discrepancies. It neither contains information about Yahia Sam's older brother, Adam Bihram, nor does it mention the two copies of the *Ginza*, Hibil BrHiia's and Adam Yuhana's. The colophon has Hawa, as before, but from here on to the last copyist, Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan, the colophon differs from its equivalent in *Ms. A*. Some of the copyists are the same, but *Ms. B* does not have Šadia Mamania, for instance.

Baktiar Bulbul includes a postscript after *GR* 18, but it is much shorter than the one in *Ms. A*. He states the place, Maqdam, and the date, the thirteenth day of the third month, Nuna (Pisces), and the year, 1042, according to Arab reckoning (1632 CE). Baktiar Bulbul finished copying *GR* in the house of Ganam, son of Mhatam, son of Zakia Gazania. The Sultan is Mahamad, son of Mubarak, whose predecessor had introduced the teachings of Twelver-Shiʿism to Huwaiza.[52] Sayyid Mahamad ruled for only about two additional years after the colophon was written.

As noted earlier, it seems that the copyist brought the manuscript, maybe partially copied, from Basra to Maqdam, for now he states that the copy came from Basra, from "the house of the master of the book,"[53] Saʿdan, son of Baktiar, brother of Bulbul. The expression "the master of the book" means the man for whose salvific benefit Baktiar Bulbul copies the *Ginza*. Baktiar Bulbul next asks Manda d̲-Hiia to forgive Saʿdan his sins. However, his hope for the Sultan of Basra, ʿAlia Paša, son of Aprasiab, is quite the opposite: "May his sins not be forgiven!"[54] Clearly, the political situation is very different from that of Ram Baktiar and the Mandaean community in Huwaiza seventy-two years earlier. Perhaps the cursed Sultan of Basra[55] was a contributing factor to Baktiar Bulbul's move from Basra to Maqdam.

In colophon 7, after *GL*, Baktiar Bulbul states that he copied from Saʿdan's uncle's book.[56] In Maqdam now, Baktiar Bulbul probably has to use a *Ginza* other than the one he worked from back in Basra. Except for their initiators, nephew and uncle have the same lineage. Interestingly, Saʿdan's uncle copied his book from Ram Baktiar—the copyist of *Ms. A*. This tie-in to *Ms. A* makes good sense. From here on in colophon 7, the lineages of copyists in *Ms. B*'s *GL* cohere with those in *Ms. A*.

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[52] See Mazzaoui, *Origins of the Safavids*, 71.

[53] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 182.

[54] Ibid.

[55] The Ottoman governor, who had purchased his position, was "a military man of uncertain origin" (John E. Woods, pers. comm., 11 Oct. 1992).

[56] This uncle may be the just mentioned Bulbul, brother of Saʿdan's father Baktiar.

This colophon also switches from *sidra* to *šapta* in the same spot as *Ms. A* did (only once does the present copyist forget himself in this regard). The colophon contains the same women's names as did *Ms. A*. It has "Ṭaubaṭia" for "Ṭabia,"[57] who is an initiate of Zazai d̠-Gawazta. At this extremely early point in the lineage, a third term appears: *ktaba* ("book," "writing"). The copy is called "an old *ktaba*."[58] The colophon ends, as did *Ms. A*, with Šlama, daughter of Qidra.

Ms. C

As noted, *Ms. C*'s copyist, Yahia Adam—who seems to be a *ganzibra*—is the initiate of *Ms. B*'s copyist, the *ganzibra* Baktiar Bulbul. (Both are of the Ram Ziwa clan). Yahia Adam resided in Huwaiza and completed his copy-work in 1680 CE (AH 1091), forty-eight years after Baktiar Bulbul did his. Yahia Adam starts his first colophon using the formulaic expression, "This is the end of the books, these *zharas* that I copied—I am small, a child (among my) brethren *ganzibras* and I am the dust of the *naṣuraiia* and ashes beneath the feet of the pious. I am Yahia Adam, son of Baktiar Bulbul."[59]

The first colophon in this *Ginza* shows greater affinities with *Ms. A* than with *Ms. B*. Yahia Adam copies for the benefit of craftsman ʿAbidala, whose *maṣbuta* name is Yahia Ram Yuhana, son of Maʿtuq. Such "doubling" of names—secular and baptismal— happens in other Mandaean colophons, as we shall see. Several names in both ʿAbidala's lineage and in the immediately ensuing one are secular names. For copying *GR* 1–13, Yahia Adam uses the book of a craftsman Masʿud, which is a secular name. Several of the names in Masʿud's lineage are secular.

In the scribal generation prior to ʿAbidala appears the copyist Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil. He is the copyist of *JB*'s *Ms. A*. Belonging to the Quṭana family line of priests, Adam Zihrun worked in Khalafabad on the Šaharrie River (modern name: Abu Hanjour) in Khuzistan. Khalafabad lies farther east than other Mandaean habitations I have encountered so far. Adam Zihrun turns out to be the "grandson" (i.e., an initiate of the initiate) of Ram Baktiar, who copied Paris *Ginza Ms. A*. The intervening link between the two men is Zakia Šitil, the initiator of Adam Zihrun.

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[57] Perhaps "gazelle" or "deer" (see *MD*, 173a).

[58] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 230.

[59] Ibid., p. 119.

Because the colophon states that Adam Zihrun copied from a book belonging to his own father, Ram Baktiar, the natural question is, Why did Ram Baktiar not initiate his own son into priesthood? Why the intervening link, Zakia Šitil? We have here a situation where a "grandson" in the initiator-lineage sense is really the biological son of his lineage "grandfather." Earlier, I noted the possibility that a priest candidate might choose to be initiated by someone other than his own father (assuming that the father is a priest), in order to forge loyalty with another clan. That logic does not work here, for Adam Zihrun belongs in a clear Quṭana lineage. Moreover, his biological father, Ram Baktiar, is surely no longer alive in 1680. If, say, Ram Baktiar was twenty-five years old when he copied *Ms. A* in 1560 and he lived to be eighty, to 1615, he might have had his son at a very advanced age. And Yahia Adam could have copied his text, *Ms. C*, when he was very old. It is a stretch but not impossible.

Arriving at a date for the copying activities of three men in the first few lineages in *Ms. C*'s first colophon is a straightforward task: the copyist himself, Yahia Adam, 1680 CE; Adam Zihrun, active 1629; and his biologicial father and lineage "grandfather," Ram Baktiar, 1560. So, within the first few segments of the scribal links in the colophon, we find a span of 120 years.

Ram Baktiar soon shows up as copyist here in colophon 1 in *Ms. C* in his own right. Four scribal generations before Yahia Adam, we find two men who also appear in both *Ms. A*'s and *Ms. B*'s colophons: Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram Diqnana, and Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. From here on, *Ms. C* veers off from *Ms. B* and follows *Ms. A*. Colophon 2 in *Ms. C* continues the same pattern, as does colophon 3, turning off in the same spot as the two others and starting to link up with *Ms. A* at Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram Diqnana.

Of note in colophon 3 is Haiašum, son of Sku (or Ska) Hiia ("he saw Life"). Haiašum is a priest occurring only in the third colophon (i.e., after *GR* 15) in all four *Ginza* manuscripts. He marks the fifth "generation" before the end of the colophon. His initiator, Sku Hiia, is, as noted above, the last copyist in all four *JB*s used by Petermann and Lidzbarski. I estimate his time to be around the year 700.[60] Sku Hia has another initiate in addition to

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[60] This seems a reasonable time for the collection of the variegated texts of *JB* (many of which must have been considerably older). See chap. 11 below on *JB*, and

Haiašum; he is Brik Manda Šitil, whom we have already met in *GL*, six "generations" before that colophon's end.

Colophon 4, after *GR* 16, follows that of *Ms. A* more closely than *Ms. B*. Near its end this colophon is garbled and abbreviated. As its earliest copyist it has Yuhana Sarwan, son of Anuš Bihdad, which is incorrect.[61] The normal ending for colophon 4 in the *Ginza* is Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihad. Hawa, daughter of Yuhana/Yahia, appears in this colophon, but the verb normally assigned to her, *maknušta*, is here given in masculine form, while the feminine form shows up attached to a man two "generations" removed from her: Sam Hibil, son of Adam. This demonstrates the corrupt condition of the latter part of colophon 4. Comparing it with the two other *GR* 16 colophons, we are, luckily, able to provide an emendation for it.

There are discrepancies in colophons 2, 3, and 4 in the lineages between Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun, and Hawa, daughter of Yuhana. Mysteriously, Hawa is left out of *Ms. C*'s colophon 5, but this may simply be an oversight. This colophon ends, like its equivalents in other *Ginzas*, with Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. Colophon 6, too, is much closer to *Ms. A* than to *Ms. B*. Here we find Mhatam and his older brother Adam Bahran/Bihram, son of Zakia Mašhadia, copying from two books, one belonging to Hibil BrHiia from the town of Garzania, and another from Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia Anuš, of the clans Šuʿialia and Busʿaid. The difference from *Ms. B* is that there we found only *one* brother, Mhatam Bulbul, copying from *one* book, that of Yahia Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia Anuš, Šuʿilia. (In comparison with the information just above, we see that "Yahia" has been added to Adam Yuhana's name). Colophon 6 now follows those in *Mss. A* and *B* to the end, with Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan, as the last copyist. The last sentence is exactly the same as in other colophons 6, "And the copy was old and there was no more. Life is victorious in the world that does not change! And the people of *naṣiruta* are victorious and change nothing of what Life commanded."[62]

Yahia Adam ends his sixth colophon in the requisite manner, giving this information:

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my "A Re-Investigation of *The Book of John*." See also Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 72 and 137, for the reference to the "Dome of the Rock," which the Mandaeans associated with Judaism. The Dome was constructed in 691 CE.

[61] The reason is that the formula properly belonging to Anuš Maʿilia is also, erroneously, attributed to Yuhana Sarwan here.

[62] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 184.

> The day (today) is Habšaba, the nineteenth of the month of Pisces, the year (that began on) a Monday, the year 91 after 1000, according to the reckoning of the Arabs. May the world fall down on them! And may Manda d̲-Hiia quench their ire agaist the great Stem of Souls! (I am) in the town Kiwiza [i.e., Huwaiza] by the waters of Karka, in the courtyard of my own house. The Sultan of Kiwiza is Siiad Kidar, son of ʿAlia, son of Kalap, son of Muṭlab, son of Kidar, son of Mšiha Mahdia; in this year, (the Sultan is) Kidar, son of ʿLia, son of Kalap. And there is a lord, a governor in it [i.e., in the town], a brother of Said Piršala, son of ʿLia, and another brother, ʿBibala, son of ʿLia; he is Sam Sah.
>
> May the Great Life suppress their rage from the great Stem of Souls, due to the hands of the seven [i.e., the planets]! And (may) Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš (do likewise)! May there be a helper and a deliverer from their [i.e., the planets' and rulers'] hands and from the sons of ʿUr [.i.e., the dragon-monster], son of Darkness, and (may) Yawar vindicate us from their hands! And may Life be victorious![63]

The curse on the Arabs—so common in Mandaean colophons—appears here for the first time in the Paris *Ginza* documents.[64] The evil rulers are equated with or influenced by the negatively evaluated planets and with Ruha's dragon son. The situation for the Mandaeans now appears to be more similar to the situation in *Ms. B*—where one would also have expected the curse. The conditions are far removed from the peaceful, protected time of *Ms. A*'s copyist, Ram Baktiar. Because Sayyid ʿAli Khan (Siiad Kidar's predecessor and probably his father) died in 1681, and the colophon stems from the previous year, we may here see signs of internecine battles breaking out already before the father's death.[65]

In his introduction to the *GL* colophon, Yahia Adam uses the formulaic expression to the effect that he is "small among [his] brethren *tarmida*s."[66] But in his introduction to the first colophon, the phrase was, "brethren *ganzibra*s." This seems inconsistent, but perhaps it indicates that there had been a change in the priestly community in the meantime. The *GL* colophon gives two new lineages at the copyist's own time, and these lineages contain both secular and baptismal names. Even Yahia Adam's own lineage seems different, but it is probably just garbled and abbreviated. (I suspect that Yahia Adam may have been very old when he copied the

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[63] Ibid.

[64] For the pun, see n. 2 above.

[65] See Luft, "Mushaʿshaʿs," 674a.

[66] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 230.

Ginza). Yahia Adam still copied this part of the *Ginza*, *GL*, for ʿAbidala (= Yahia Ram Yuhana), but he seems to be using a different book than his model for *GR*. This happens in other *Ginza* copyings as well: a scribe may use one book in his work on *GR* and another one for *GL*. One link in the current *GL* lineage is found in *Ms. A* but not in *Ms. B*, namely, Bahran, son of Yuhana Zakia, who appears seventeen "generations" removed from Yahia Adam himself. Nine "generations" further away in time, at Adam, son of Yahia Papia, there is a change from *sidra* to *šapta*, but not in the same place as in the other Paris *GL* manuscripts. Otherwise, the colophon follows its *GL* equivalents.

Ms. D

The copyist of *Ms. D* finished his work sometime in the 1700s CE. The date is consistently erased in the manuscript, and I do not know the reason for this. (But, as noted, we will find more information about the scribe's copying date for another manuscript in chap. 4). No city is named here in the colophon to *Ms. D*, only the channel Šamaʿnia, which is near Basra. Probably a *tarmida*, the copyist Yahia Bihram, son of Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma families, did his work for a pious craftsman, ʿAbadala, son of Našim, whose lineage consists of entirely vernacular names, except for *one*. A woman owned the book that Yahia Bihram used: Badriiah, daughter of Ṣuraš. In her lineage, two *maṣbuta* names appear, while the rest are secular. After the first four lineages we find, as in the third lineage of *Ms. C*, the *JB* copyist Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil, son of Ram Baktiar.

The next lineage begins with Zihrun Yuhana, son of Adam. Adam Zihrun copied from his book, and it now turns out that Zihrun Yuhana copied from his own grandfather, who is none other than Ram Baktiar. However, because Ram Baktiar does not appear in Zihrun Yuhana's lineage in the initiator "grandfather" slot, it is clear that theirs was a biological, not an initiatory, relationship. Eight scribal generations earlier than Ram Baktiar, at the ubiquitous Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, there is mention of two books used for copying, but the roster furnishes only one of these; usually, a scrupulous copyist will list both owners' names. The colophon follows the others after *GR* 13 quite closely and ends, like them, with Ram Šilai.

Colophon 2 shows several discrepancies. Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil, copied from a book belonging to a namesake, Adam Zihrun, son of Adam. This second Adam Zihrun belongs to the same lineage as the first one, but the copy seems garbled. The colophon has Sarwan, son of Bahran Mušarah, six "generations" prior to the second Adam Zihrun. This man, Sarwan, occurs otherwise only in *Ms. C*'s colophon 5 (after *GR* 17). It is precisely here, with Sarwan, that the fifth colophon in *Ms. C* starts to veer off from that of *Ms. A*. In *Ms. D*'s second colophon we find the same lineage as in *Ms. C*'s fifth colophon at this point. But the colophon soon begins to follow that of *GR* 14 in *Ms. A* again. At the end, however, the three last scribal generations agree with those of the other colophons after *GR* 14, ending with the two initiates, Šadan and Banan Bihram, sons of Brik Yawar.

Colophon 3 starts following the others at the scribal slot inhabited by Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil. At Yahia Bayan, son of the craftsman Sam Diqnana, three "generations" earlier, colophon 3 in all four manuscripts begin to cohere. This colophon ends with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, as do its equivalents. And the fourth colophon follows the same pattern as the others after *GR* 16. In colophon 5, Hawa, daughter of Yuhana, appears; she was absent from *Ms. C*'s colophon after *GR* 17.

In colophon 6, Yahia Bihram uses the more modern term *ʿbin* instead of *br* ("son") in the second lineage, namely, that of ʿAbadala. We learn that a scribe we have seen earlier, (Dihdar) Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram, copies for the benefit of his own father-in-law, Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. Yahia Sam's own older brother, Adam Bihram, son of Zakia Mašhadia, is the next copyist link. In his scribal work, Adam Bihram consulted two books, which, along with their owners, are mentioned in *Mss. A* and *C* but not in *Ms. B*.

It is interesting to notice the differences between colophons 1 and 6 here in *Ms. D* with regard to Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul. In colophon 1, the father-in-law, Yahia Sam, shows up as copyist at a later stage than his son-in-law, Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, and no text is being copied *for* him. Aligning the two (roughly parallel) sections in *Ms. D*'s colophons 1 and 6, we find, giving five neighboring scribal links in each:[67]

Ms. D, colophon 1	Ms. D, colophon 6
1. Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, son of Anuš Adam, son of Bihdad ʿAziz,	Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Diqnana,
(copied) from	(for/from)
2. Yahia, son of Laiit	Sam, son of Laiit Hibil, son of Adam Anuš, ʿAziz, etc.,

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[67] In some of the lineages that ensue, a few names are reversed, or one or two left out. There are other inconsistencies as well, as close scrutiny and parallel readings would show.

from	from
3. Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul,	Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul,
son of	son of
Sam Bihram, son of	Sam Bihram, son of
Mhatam ʿAsikir,	Mhatam, ʿAsikir,
from	for his father-in-law
4. Adam Yuhana, son of	Yahia Sam, son of
Yahia Anuš, Šuʿilia,	Zihrun Hibil,
From	and his older brother
5. Hibil, son of	Adam Bihram, son of
Yahia	Zakia Mašhadia

One notes the different placings of Dihdar Mhatam Bubul, who is number 3 in both colophons, and his father-in-law Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun, number 1 in the first column, but number 4 in the second one.

It is time to tackle a recurrent enigma: in colophon 1, we see Yahia, son of Laiit, as the second copyist. But "Laiit" does not, at first, seem to be a real name, but an epithet appended to the first copyist of colophon 6 in *Ms. D* in the correlation above, Sam Bihram, of the clan Diqnana, who is the initiator of Yahia. Yahia himself often carries the additional name Bayan (or even Bihram), which we find in colophon 1 but not in 6.

These two men, Yahia (Bayan/Bihram) and his initiator Sam Bihram, identified as Laiit and Diqnana, appear very often in colophons. They show up precisely at the confluence of so many scribal links, and they are scribal neighbors of the famous Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun and of his son-in-law Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram.

I have pondered for many years now on Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana, and what the epithet "Laiit" conveys. Literally, it means "he is not," "it is not," "it/he does not exist," and things of that sort. Three possibilities present themselves. First, Sam Diqnana is a disgraced priest, someone who has committed priestly mistakes, who has been defrocked, and, ideally, someone whose existence should be overlooked. However, he still merits a place as a scribe. And he had at least this one pupil, Yahia (Bayan/Bihram), who is sometimes also called "Laiit." Second, "Laiit" *is* a real name, but an unusual one. There are indeed a few other priests, copyists of *Sfar* Malwašia, who carry the same epithet and who can be dated to the same period as Sam Bihram Diqnana.[68] Third—and perhaps the most intriguing interpretation—one might see Sam Bihram Diqnana as an accomplished magician, specializing in making things disappear. That could explain the phrase "it is not." On further thought, I have decided to adhere to the less exotic possibility: that Laiit is a real name.

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[68] Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 156.

Now, I return to other features of *Ms. D*'s colophon 6. Absent from it is Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, who was present in *Mss. A* and *C* but not in *Ms. B*. Otherwise, the colophon is very close to that of *Ms. B*, and it ends like the others, with Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan.

The postscript to colophon 6 reads as follows:

> Again, I set in order and brought to conclusion this book that I copied for a pious man, whose heart is supported in the First Life. And I copied this book so that there might be a commemoration for him in Tibil [i.e., the earthly world] and above in the great Worlds of Light. And his name is ʿAbdala, and his baptismal name is Bihram, son of Anhar. In the names of Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš, and in the name of Yawar Manda d̲-Hiia, and in the confidence of the great King of Light! Praised be their names in the Great Place—the house of the faithful!
>
> Again, I set in order this book on a Saturday, in the middle month of autumn [*paiiẓ*] the fifth day, in the year (that began on) a Sunday, the year one thousand and one hundred…[erased] according to the reckoning of the Arabs. May the world fall down on them, and may Manda d̲-Hiia quench their ire against the great Stem of Souls! I copied this book by the waters of Šamʿania in my own courtyard. And the governor is Ndin Saiid Abdala, son of Saiid Paršala, son of ʿAlia, son of Kalap, son of Saiid Maṭlab. And may Life be victorious above all worlds![69]

The condition of the Mandaeans is strained. The ruler seems to be a grandson of the one mentioned in the postscript to *Ms. C*, and he is probably the father of a later one, Faradj Allah, who expanded the Mushaʿshaʿs' power, though only briefly, westward.[70] Ndin Saiid Abdala himself may well be living during the time of possible clamor for power at the death of Sayyid ʿAli Khan (as suggested regarding the postscript to *Ms. C*). For this reason I set the time of *Ms. D* in the early 1700s.

At its beginning, *GL*'s colophon in *Ms. D* shows few discrepancies with the others. It has *one* new link, Bayan, son of Yahia, who is absent from the other *GL* colophons. He seems to be an initiate of Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, who appears nearby in the colophon. However, the colophon has only eight lineages, for it ends abruptly with Sarwan Bulbul Bayan, son of Šadan Zarzuia. This is an example of a broken-off colophon. It stops in the middle of a clause and has perhaps been stolen—an instance of the frequently reprimanded activity of cutting colophons for the purpose of gluing them on to other documents.

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[69] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 186–87.

[70] Luft, "Mushaʿshaʿs," 674a.

As noted, in order to counter the impression that a work has a broken-off colophon, one finds formulations assuring the reader or copier that "the copy was not cut off," "what was copied did not reach further," "I did not change it," etc. We have observed examples of this in the postscripts to *GR* 16 and 17, especially. But in *Ms. D*'s *GL* colophon, there *must* have been more, and I can only assume that it originally followed the other *GL* colophons.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Among the observations one may draw from this chapter, I would stress the following:

The unusually positive picture of the Mandaeans in Huwaiza in the postscript to *GR* 18 in *Ms. A*; the consistent endings of the seven colophons in the *Ginza* manuscripts (except for the broken-off colophon in *Ms. D*'s *GL*); the very early copyists in the three full *GL* colophons; the recurring dominant scribal luminaries, prevalent family names, and lineages; the women copyists/editors/ book-owners; the question of whether the designations involving the women early in *GL*'s colophon show initiation relationships or are *maṣbuta* names. In addition, one notes in the *GL* colophons of *Mss. B* and *D* that the term *šapta* is not always a sign of great age. *Sidra* and *ktaba* are also used early on. The early copyists, the recurrent luminaries, family names, and the women copyists/priests are among the topics that will be explored in more detail in subsequent chapters.

All four *Ginza*s hail from the time and locale of the Mushaʿshaʿ dynasty in Khuzistan, an area known for its plentiful rivers, but also for resembling hell in terms of summer heat.[71] The Mandaeans may have wandered in, following along the rivers from Babylonia. How early is still a matter of dispute.[72]

* * *

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[71] Paul Schwarz, *Iran im Mittelalter nach den arabischen Geographen*, part 7, vol. 4: *Khuzistan*. Schwarz here quotes Makkaddisi (295) and Kazvini (312). I thank John E. Woods for this reference.

[72] See Chapter 15, below.

The next chapter provides colophon research from seven additional *Ginza*s. Coherences and divergences among them a noted, and the *Ginza*s just treated are taken into account, too. Thereby, a fuller picture of the *Ginza* scribal traditions emerges. But first, I give a translation of colophons 1 and 7 in Paris *Ginza Ms. A*.

GR COLOPHON 1, PARIS *GINZA MS. A*[73]

Square brackets indicate what I take to be errors. Brackets carry some of my additions/explanations; others are found in the notes. "R." stands for "*rba/rbai*."

> This is the end of the books and these *zhara*s that I copied for myself; I am a small child among my brethren *tarmida*s and a slave among the *naṣuraiia:*
>
> I am Ram Baktiar, son of *rbai* [lit. "my teacher"] Bihram Šadan, son of Yahia Maimun, son of Adam Yahia, son of Baktiar, son of Zihrun, son of R. Adam, son of R. Sam Yuhana, son of R. Sam, *kiniana* [i.e., "family/clan"] name Quṭana.
>
> (This book) which I copied for myself from the book (*sidra*) of our head—our learned one, a son of a steadfast root, a son of an elevated family—he is the precious craftsman
>
> Yahia Mhatam, son of Anuš, son of Zihrun, son of Zakia, son of Manṣur ʿUbadia, son of Praš, son of Yahia, son of Naṣir, son of R. Yahia, son of Anuš, *kiniana* (primary clan): Anuš, son of Danqa,[74] *laqab* (secondary clan):[75] Šapaia, which I [error for "he"] copied from a book of craftsman Yahia, son of craftsman Lait, from the book of our head Dihdar—by the name Mhatam Bulbul[76]—son of Sam Bihram, son of Mhatam ʿAsikir.
>
> And *he* copied it: the elevated and precious R.—blessed be he in *naṣiruta*!—Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, son of Anuš Adam, son of Bihdad ʿAziz,
>
> from the book of R. Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia Anuš, kiniana: Šuʿilia,
>
> which *he* copied: R. Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, family name Zarzuia,

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[73] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 290–91.

[74] In the present context, this clan name is not the name borne by the famous Mandaean leader Anuš bar Danqa of early Islamic times (see chap. 9 below).

[75] See the Introduction (p. 3–6) for the terminology regarding family/clan names.

[76] One of Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul's pupils, Sam Yuhana, appears in the *CP*'s lineage (see chap. 9 below).

which he copied from the book of a pious man, who is Hibil BrHiia, son of Sam BrHiia, Nangara ["carpenter"],
which *he* copied: R. Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, from his own book.
He copied it (from) Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, for the first time, because there were two books:
one (belonging to) the pious Anuš.
Again, he copied it [for a second time] from a book of Mhatam, son of Bihram Mušarah,
which *he* copied: R. Bihram Bayan Šupartaiia,
from a book of his pupil BrHiia, son of Yuhana, son of Sarwan,
which *he* copied: R. Bihram Bayan, Šupartaiia, from a book of
Adam, son of Ram Gadana,
which *he* copied: Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia,
from the book of our head, Dihdar Zihrun, son of Sam Sakara,
which *he* copied: Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia,[77]
from the book of Bayan, son of Yahia Diqnana,
which *he* copied: Yahia Manuš [error for "Anuš"] Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad,
from the book of Hibil Yuhana, son of Šitil, and Hibil Yuhana copied from the book that *he* copied:
Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad,
for Baktiar Bulʿiz, son of Šitluia Gadana,
which he copied from the book of Sam Hibil, son of Anuš Ṣalupa,
which *he* copied: Bihram Hibil, son of Mhatam, son of Hibil Yuhana;
which he copied from the book of Yahia Zakia, son of Brik Yawar, son of Paiiš,

[missing section]

and Ram Ziwa, son of Šaiar, son of Zihrun copied for his brother in *kušṭa* ["truth"]:
Hibil Yuhana, son of Zakia,
who copied it from the book of
Adam, son of Yahia, and Adam copied it (from)
Šar [error for "Šaiar"], son of Zihrun,
from the book of BrHiia, son of Gadana, son of Šaiar Ziwa BrHiia. He copied it (from)
Šaiar and Sam Ziwa, sons of Bayan Hibil,
from the book of Zakria, son of Hibil, from his own book, and Zakria Anuš [error for the verb *ansa* "copied"]
from the books of Šar [alternative spelling elsewhere: "Šad"] Manda, son of Ska Yawar, and Šar Manda copied it (from)

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[77] Note that this is the third time Yahia appears as copyist here!

ʿQaiam, son of Zindana,
from the book of Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar. They [error for "he"] copied it (from) our teacher
ʿQaiam, (son of) Zindana, from his own book which he copied from an old book that was housed in his library.
Again, these *zhara*s were from them, from an old book housed in his library—a manuscript [*kdab ʿda*] by Ram Šilai, son of Daimir. And Ram Šilai copied them [the *zhara*s?] from the first fathers. *saka*[78]

GL COLOPHON, PARIS *GINZA MS. A*[79]

These are the teachings [*drašia*] on the souls that I copied for myself—I am poor and a child, small among my brethren *tarmida*s and a slave of *naṣuraiia*. I am Ram Baktiar, son of R. Bihram Šadan, son of Yahia Maimun, son of Adam, son of Yahia, son of Ram, son of Baktiar, son of Zihrun, son of R. Adam, son of R. Sam Yuhana, son of R. Sam, *kiniana*: Quṭana;
(the book) that I copied for myself from the book [*sidra*] of our head, a learned (man), son of a steadfast root, son of an elevated family; he is a precious craftsman,[80] son of a precious craftsman:
Manṣur ʿUbadia,[81] by the name Anuš, son of Zihrun, son of Zakia, son of Manṣur, son of Praš, son of Yahia, son of Naṣir, son of R. Yahia, son of Anuš, *kiniana*: Br Danqa, and *laqab*: the sons of Šapaia,
which I [error for "he"] copied for his servant [?]. I am a slave and a child, small among my brethren. I am Ram Baktiar, son of R. Bihram Šadan, son of Yahia Maimun, son of Adam, son of Yahia, son of Ram, son of Baktiar, son of Zihrun, son of R. Adam, son of R. Sam Yuhana, son ["son" is repeated] of R. Sam, *kiniana*: Quṭana;
which I [again, error for "he," i.e., Manṣur ʿUbadia] copied from the book of Yahia Bayan, son of Sam, son of Bihram,[82] family name Diqnana;
which he copied (from) the lofty and precious R.—blessed be he in *naṣiruta*!—Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, son of Anuš Adam, son of Zakia Bulbul, son of Bihdad ʿAziz, *kiniana*: Furaihia,

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[78] *Saka* ("end" or "limit"), written *s—a*, marks the end of a section in Mandaean manuscripts.

[79] Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 137–38.

[80] He is Yahia Mhatam, as is evident from parallel *GL* colophons.

[81] This is a secular name.

[82] Sam and Bihram are sometimes separate names/persons in this context but not always.

which he copied from the book of the lofty and learned Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram, son of R. Mhatam, *kiniana* ʿAsikir. He is the father of the wife of the master of this book, which he copied, the father-in-law,[83] (who is) R. Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, son of Anuš Bihdad, ʿAziz,
from the book of R. Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia Šuʿailia, of the sons of ʿArip,
which *he* copied: our teacher Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, son of Šadan Zarzuia,
which he copied from the book that he copied for his older brother, R. Yuhana, son of Adam Bayan, son of Šadan Zarzuia,[84]
from the book that he copied for himself from the book of Mhatam Zihrun, son of Bahran Mušarah,
which *he* copied: R. Bayan, son of Adam Šupartaiia,
from a book that he copied from
BrHiia, son of Yuhana,
which he copied from a book ["from a book" is repeated] of
Adam, son of Bayan,[85]
which he copied for Bahran, son of Yuhana Zakia, son of Bungir,
from the book of Bihdad, son of Yuhana Zakia, son of Sam Maʿuan,
which he copied from the book of Hibil, son of Bihram Šitil,
which he copied from the book of Baktiar Abulʿiz, son of Šitluia Gadana,
which *he* copied: our head Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad,
from the book of Sam Hibil, son of Šitluia,
which *he* copied: R. Bihram Hibil, son of Mhatam Hibil Yuhana,
from the book of Hibil Yuhana, son of Zakia,
from the book that *he* copied: Yahia Zakia, son of Brik Yawar,
who copied it (from) Adam, son of Yahia Papia, and Adam copied it
(from) Bayan Šaiar, son of Zihrun
from the book of BrHiia Gadana, and BrHiia copied it
(from) Šaiar and Sam Ziwa, son [should be "sons"] of Bayan Hibil,
from the book of Zakria, son of Hibil, and Zakria copied it (from) Zihrun, son of Ram Ziwa,
from the book of Nṣab, son of Maškna, son of Yuhana. And Nṣab, son of Maškna, son of Yuhana

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[83] Problematic! Compare the correlating colophons 1 and 6 in *Ms. D* above. The difficulty lies in the word *ham*, which means both "again" and "father-in-law." Based on the context, I choose the latter reading here.

[84] The two brothers have the same lineage.

[85] Should be reversed: Bayan, son of Adam.

(who) copied from the book of Bayan Hibil, son of Šadan, and Banan Bihram, sons of Brik Yawar. And Bayan Hibil and his brother copied[86]
(from) ʿQaiam, son of Zindana,
from a scroll [šapta] of Miriai, daughter of Simat.[87] And Miriai wrote it
(from) Sam, son of Sakara, son of Zakia,
from his own scroll that he copied from a scroll of Ruzba, son of Hawa,[88] that was among his books
of Sam, son of Zakia. And Ruzba [who] copied it
(from) Ram, son of Bihram,
from the scroll of Brik Manda Šitil, son of Sku Hiia, and Brik Manda copied
from a scroll of Anuš Šabur, son of Šiglai,
from the scroll of Nṣab, son of Maškna, son of BrHiia,
from the scroll of Ṭabia, son of Zazai,
(from) an old book [*ktaba*] that was in the *naṣiruta* of Nṣab, son of Maškna,
from Yuzaṭaq, son of Sasa.
Again, from the scroll of the father (of) Šlama, daughter of Qidra.
And they were in the spirit of Life for the believers who came forth from our building[89] and mine, Ram Baktiar, son of Hawa Mudalal,[90] and for my father Bihram Šadan, son of Šadia Kisna; for my mother Hawa Mudalal, daughter of Anhar; and for my wife Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hawa, and for my children Hawa Bana and Bihram Šitil and Zakia Šitil and Zihrun Baktiar and Adam, children of Šadia Mamania.
And Life persists, (Life) that does not come to nought; and radiance, light, and glory that do not depart and do not end! *saka.*

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[86] The first *n* is left out of the verb *ansalun* "they copied." The two different "fathers"/initiators given for the two brothers seem garbled, for Šadan is not the father of Bayan Hibil, but a fellow-initiate of Bayan Hibil and Banan Bihram—along with a fourth man, Bihram. See *Ms. C*'s *GL* colophon (Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*, 232), where the four appear as co-owners of *GL*.

[87] Both are women's names.

[88] Note the baptismal (or is it initiatory?) designation.

[89] i.e., "religion."

[90] In the formula from here on, baptismal names are used.

3 SEVEN OTHER *GINZAS*

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In the four Paris *Ginza*s, I have noted a number of recurrent Mandaean clan names—in fact, more than twenty of them. Examples of names include Dihdaria, Šabur, Kuhailia, Zarzuia, and Furaiha.[1] At a certain point in history, around the year 1500, almost all of the *Ginza* scribal lineages begin to run together into a common stream. Due to luminaries such as Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram, ʿAsakir (the spelling varies), and his father-in-law Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, ʿAziz, it is possible to determine this time period. We have also seen that Yahia (Bayan), son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana,[2] belongs to the same era. These priests furnish a real hub, a connecting point. Even manuscripts copied in recent years—and not only *Ginza*s—tend to flow like distinct brooks toward the main river constituted by these men.

But someone used to reading Mandaean colophons would immediately notice that beyond a certain point there is a dearth, or outright lack, of well-known clan names, such as Kuhailia, Kupašia, and Durakia (the last two often appear together); Manduia and ʿKuma (the latter means "dark," "black"); Kamisia, and Riš Draz (the latter means "long beard"). The only Kuhailia clan member who appears as a scribe in the Paris *Ginza*s is Adam Kuhailia, whose initiate, Yahia, is nearly ubiquitous in Mandaean colophons. This priest was obviously a famous scribe. At times, colophons will list him four or even five times as a copyist of a text. Yahia, therefore, marks another "hub," a connecting point, and he lived before the priests Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul and his father-in-law Yahia Sam. The Kuhailias are old, and as one of the earliest attested ones, Yahia himself is datable approximately to the twelfth century.[3]

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[1] Chapter 12 tracks the earliest occurrences of the dominant family names.

[2] The name Diqnana may be related to the word for "beard" (*diqna/ziqna*); see *MD*, 67b, 109a).

On the basis of other colophons, it looks like Kupašia (modern spelling: Khaffagi) and Durakia (Dorragi) lineages can be traced back to the mid fifteenth century. The Manduia and ʿKuma clans, apparently concentrated in south-central Iraq, seem to be geographically separated from the Khuzistan and Basra communities. The Manduia priest lineages go back almost as far as the Kupašias do: around the middle of the fifteenth century. On the other hand, Kamisia is not attested in colophons even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In contrast, Riš Draz is early, though the name does not appear very often.

As I move into the present chapter, on the colophons in seven other *Ginza*s, it is worth keeping in mind clan names and recurrent scribes from the colophons in the four Paris *Ginza*s. They will furnish a framework for detecting coherences, discrepancies, and confluences of lineages as compared with these other *Ginza*s. The seven other *Ginza*s are:

DC 22, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford University
Two *Ginza*s in San Diego, California
Two *Ginzas* in New York
The printed Australian *Ginza*, published in 1998
Hunt. 6,[4] in the Bodleian Library

Were I to make an in-depth comparative study of the colophons in all the eleven *Ginza*s, I would have to correlate seventy-seven colophons. This would be a task beyond the scope of the present work. But in what follows, I follow to some extent the pattern of chapter 2 and note the most important differences and similarities in the colophons, both with each other and with the Paris manuscripts. Key copyists, beneficiaries, and lineages receive attention. The postscripts, too, have a role in the task of tracing historical lines.

DC 22

In January 1990, I sat for over a week in the Oriental Reading Room in the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, working my way through the colophons in most of the Mandaean manuscripts in the Drower Collection

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[3] Dating questions concerning family names are treated in chap. 12.

[4] Theodor Nöldeke refers to this book in his *Mandaische Grammatik*, xxiii. E. S. Drower, in "A Mandaean Bibliography," 37, says of the *Ginza*, "There are many copies of this codex in Europe."

(DC). I had begun this task in August 1989. In this research setting, a particular pattern was followed: picking up my written request for Mandaean documents, one of the librarians would leave her seat, walk to the back of the quiet, book-lined room, and disappear through a door at its far end. Soon after, she would reemerge, having visited the temperature-controlled room housing the manuscripts, and now carrying, according to my request, a stack of green, rectangular cartons. Each of these holds one Mandaean scroll. Wrapped in coarse cotton felt, the scroll lies rolled up as if in a nest inside the carton.

At times, the librarian might return bearing a text of a different format. One of them is the DC's sole *Ginza*, *DC 22*, a large and heavy codex with a grayish linen cover. Its script is clear, even, and beautiful, the pages made of thick paper. *DC 22* is one of the many Mandaean documents procured for Lady Drower by Sheikh Negm of Qalʿat Saleh, Liṭlaṭa, Iraq.[5] Lady Drower bought the book in 1936, and it appears to be one of the few texts in DC that may not originally have come from Iran but from Sheikh Negm's own home territory in southern Iraq.

The copyist of *DC 22* is an oft-met, meticulous worker: the scribe Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram. Ram Zihrun is the grandfather of Sheikh Abdullah Khaffagi, whom I met in Ahwaz in 1973.[6] The two men belong in a long lineage of priests, in which Sheikh Abdullah occupies the seventeenth generation slot in what appears to be a straight family line. With Sheikh Abdullah, the lineage closed, as none of his sons became priests. Tentatively, one might place the earliest ancestor in Sheikh Khaffagi's lineage around 1410.

Ram Zihrun, his grandfather, copied *DC 22* in 1831 (AH 1247), the year of the disastrous *muṭana*, the cholera that killed many Mandaeans, including the entire Mandaean priesthood. This calamity necessitated the creation of new priests from the ranks of the surviving *yalufa*s, the learned laymen. Ram Zihrun makes no mention of the cholera in his scanty postscripts to colophons 6 and 7 (i.e., after *GR* 18 and after *GL*). This omission, however, might indicate a temperament more suited to looking forward, not back to the destruction. In the years around 1831, Ram Zihrun is busy copying not only what will become *DC 22*, but also a number of other texts. His cousin, brother-in-law, and co-worker in the task of rescuing the life of Mandaean traditions and texts is Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, Kamisia, whose postscripts *do* give eloquent testimony to the devastating effects of the cholera.[7]

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[5] See chap. 5 below on Lady Drower and Sheikh Negm.

[6] See the preface to my *Mandaeans*.

According to the set colophonic formula, Ram Zihrun offers his own lineage: Ram Zihrun, son of Bihram Sam, son of Yahia Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitil, son of Yahia, son of Zihrun, son of Yahia, son of Mhatam, son of Adam, son of Adam Yuhana, son of Bihram, son of Šamš, son of Ganim, son of Adam, son of Yahia, *kiniana*: ʿAziz, and *laqab*: Kupašia. (Kupašia is identical to Khaffagi, the modern spelling of the name). He copied *GR* 1–13 for the benefit of a woman, Anhar, daughter of Šarat Simat. He used a book by his father, Bihram Sam, who copied for the salvific benefit of Hida Mamania, daughter of Hawa Mamania. Her secular name, Kašlanah, hints at the word for "jewel" (*kašla*). Her father is Šabarah, son of Nasir, and the family names are Msudnia and Pasiq Qals.[8]

Bihram Sam used a book by Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, of the Dihdaria and Šabur clans. Ram Yuhana is a known copyist, active in 1743 and 1753, as transcriber of DC's *JB* manuscript (*DC 30*), *DC 42*: *Šarh ḏ-Ṭabahata* (The Scroll of the Ancestors),[9] and the *DC 8* manuscript of *Diwan Abatur* (*Diw. Ab.*). He in turn copied the *Ginza* from a book that he copied for a craftsman, ʿUstad Sa'ud (baptismal name Ram, son of Šarat Simat). The predecessor was a *ganzibra* on whom much formulaic praise is heaped: Sam Yuhana, son of Yahia Adam, ʿAsikir. Sam Yuhana copied the book twice, and the second time he used a work by an unnamed woman, who copied it from another woman: Hida Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam.

I suspect an error at this point, because of the woman's three names, and I suggest the correction to Hida, daughter of Šarat Simat. Apart from her father's name, her lineage consists of a long row of secular names. The family name seems to be Salim. Hida's name is secular, so she was not a priest. Her scribal predecessor, the unnamed woman, may indicate an error (or perhaps even an attempt at suppressing a woman's name) in the manuscript.

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[7] See chapter 7, below, on Yahia Bihram.

[8] According to Dr. Suhaib Nashi, who belongs to the Msudina and whose information I appreciate, *qals* means "red" or "light" and refers to hair and skin color. The Msudnias are divided into light ones, Qals, and dark, ʿKuma, which is another clan name. It may be that "Pasiq" refers to "*paisaq*," the type of priest who may only perform marriages where the woman is a widow or not a virgin; he is barred from other priestly duties (see Drower, *MII*, 59).

[9] Bogdan Burtea, *Das mandäische Fest der Schalttage: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentierung der Handschrift DC 24 Šarh ḏ-parunaiia.*

Then follows a roster of Kuhailia male scribes. Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, copied from three books, though only the owner of the second one is identified. That scribe, Zihrun, a "grandson" of the famous Bihram BrHiia, depended on a codex by the *ganzibra* Yahia Ram, son of Bihram Zihrun. Yet another Kuhailia scribe follows: Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia, before this Kuhailia family scribal tradition ends and we find Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun, ʿAziz. With him, the copyist lineage enters the greater stream (as mentioned in the introductory remarks to this chapter), and we see that the son-in-law Dihdar Mhatam Zihrun is bypassed (for the moment). Instead comes Yahia, son of Laiit. Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul then appears, and the lineage in the main follows that of the first colophon in the Paris *Ginza*s from here on. Ram Šilai, as usual in colophon 1, "copied from the first fathers."

In colophon 2, Ram Zihrun copies *GR* 14, again for Anhar, who is the daughter of Šarat Simat and whose secular name is Zarip. Ram Zihrun lists the names of Anhar's parents,[10] husband, children, brother, and one grandmother. In its own way, this formulaic list functions as a *dukhrana*, a "mentioning" of names conveying the hope of salvation for all of them. After giving Anhar's father's lineage, Ram Zihrun states that he is copying from his own father's, Bihram Sam's, *Ginza*, which he, in turn, copied for a woman named Harbuiah. This is not the same woman as the beneficiary of *GR* 1–13! The copyist prior to Bihram Sam was Ram Yuhana of Šuštar, Iran, the same scribe on whom Ram Zihrun depended for *GR* 1–13.[11]

Next in colophon 2, after one male copyist (who has a female name, ʿAnat) come two women copyists or book-owners. Neither was present in colophon 1. Bihram owned the book from which Ram Yuhana copied. Mamul (also named Dihgan),[12] carrying the common epithet "pure cloud,"

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[10] Because Anhar's mother's name is *not* Šarat Simat in this list, but Yasmin, daughter of Simat, an adoptive mother or stepmother might be implied.

[11] As regards *JB* manuscripts, in addition to *DC 30* (of which Ram Yuhana is the first copyist), the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has three manuscripts of *JB*, and at least two are in private Mandaean ownership in the United States. In Iraq and Iran, there are, of course, many more, including the famous "book of lead" *JB* copy that belonged to Sheikh Abdullah Khaffagi in Ahwaz (see the preface to my *Mandaeans*, chap. 11 below on the *JB* colophons, and my "Re-Investigation of *The Book of John*."

[12] Dihgan/Dahgan means "peasant" (*MD*, 107a); it is also a female name. And *mamul* means "hope" in Arabic.

anana dakita, is the daughter of Bihram.[13] She owned the *Ginza* from which ʿAnat copied. The third woman copyist is Yasmin (Bana), daughter of Yahia Bihram, an esteemed initiator, because of his epithet "a father of *ganzibra*s," which means that several of his initiands became *ganzibra*s. Nevertheless, the *Ginza* is specified as belonging to Yasmin, not to her illustrious father. Yasmin was a priest, and the two women are placed and identified in the priestly lineages in the same manner as male priests. That is, they are not designated in relationship to their mothers, by *maṣbuta* names, but in terms of initiation relationships.

Yasmin copied from the book of Adam Anuš, son of Zakia Bulbul, Diqnana, and Adam Anuš' book's predecessor belonged to his own father-in-law, the famous Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul. Note Adam Anuš's in-law relationship to Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul; the latter is the son-in-law of Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun. Adam Anuš belongs in the scribal lineage of Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana, but Adam Anuš is three "generations" younger than Yahia Bayan. The preceding scribe in the colophon is Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, and here *DC 22* connects with the copyist lineage in *Ms. A* of the Paris manuscripts. Because the copyist of *that* document is Ram Baktiar—copy date September 1560, Huwaiza, Iran—we can put a tentative date on Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul: around 1500. His is the fourth copyist link from the beginning of *Ms. A*, as seen in chapter 2.

In support of the approximate date for Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul's scribal activities, one might keep in mind the name Yuhana Šitlan, son of Zakia Šitlan, a scribe who does not appear as copyist in any of the *Ginza*s that I have seen but who can be dated precisely to 1480.[14] So far, I have no earlier firm copying date for any Mandaean scribe. Yuhana Šitlan and Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul are roughly contemporaries, perhaps a generation apart.

After Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, Ram Zihrun's second colophon goes to his father-in-law Yahia Sam, and in the main follows its equivalents in other *Ginza*s, ending with Šadan and Banan, the sons (*DC 22* calls them "the chosen") of Brik Yawar.[15]

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[13] He is not ʿAnat's father Bihram, although the two men seem to share the same family lineage.

[14] See chap. 12 below on the old *tarik* (postscript) attached to the unpublished *DC 12*.

[15] The two have another brother, Bihram. In *Ms. A*, all three are mentioned as brothers and as fellow-copyists in the *GL* colophon.

A dried, whitish snakeskin hides like a bookmark near the end of colophon 2. A curse is placed on anyone who tries to remove it.

According to colophon 3, Ram Zihrun again copies for Anhar, daughter of Šarat Simat. His father and predecessor, Bihram Sam, copied the text for Kašlanah, whom we have seen before. Here, in colophon 3, Bihram Sam copied not from the previously encountered Ram Yuhana, but from a namesake: Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun, of the Manduia and ʿKuma families. This Ram Yuhana copied for a layman named ʿUstad (the spelling varies) Saʿud, whose baptismal name is Ram, son of Šarat Simat, family names Kamisia and Riš Draz ("long beard").

Neither of the two women priests Mamul Dihgan or Yasmin Bana show up in colophon 3. Instead, in Mamul Dihgan's slot, so to speak, appears a "paragon in *naṣiruta*" and a prolific copyist: the *ganzibra* Sam Yuhana, son of Yahia Adam, of the ʿAsikir family. Sam Yuhana is attested as copyist in *CP*'s last five colophons.[16] He also shows up as the earliest copyist of J. de Morgan's text *Qmaha d̲-Hibil Ziwa*,[17] as the third copyist link in de Morgan's so-called *ʿniania* ("responses") manuscript from 1833, and as the second copyist of *DC 42*: *Šarḥ d̲-Ṭabahata*—which he copies from Ram Yuhana.[18] Sam Yuhana's scribal activities take place around 1700.

As Sam Yuhana appeared in the slot of the woman Mamul Dihgan in colophon 2, so now, in *DC 22*'s third colophon, the slot of Yasmin is taken by another woman, Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam. She (although the colophon says "he") created her book by consulting two *Ginza*s, one of them belonging to Adam Yuhama, son of Šitil, and the other to the "chosen *ganzibra*" Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, of the Kuhailia clan. Here, as in colophon 1, the list presents a string of Kuhailias, including the famous Bihram BrHiia himself. Two Manduia copyist lineages follow until one reaches Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. Then follow Yahia Sam and his son-in-law Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, but here the family relationship between the two is, erroneously, reversed. These three men—Yahia Bayan, Yahia Sam, and Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul—form the connecting point to Paris *Ms. A*, as we have seen earlier.

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[16] See chap. 9 below.

[17] See J. de Morgan, *Textes mandaïtes*; cf. my "A Study of the Two Liturgical Collections in J. de Morgan's *Textes Mandaïtes*." An alternative title of the *qmaha* ("talisman," "exorcism") is *Zrazta d̲-Hibil Ziwa*. It is the longest and most famous of all Mandaean exorcisms. Another copy of this *zrazta* is *DC 44*; yet a third is in private Mandaean ownership in California.

[18] For Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, from Šuštar, see colophon 1 above.

Lineages now appear in varying sequence, a sign that much copying is going on within the same time period, often in the same generation. The time is probably the fifteenth century. This colophon in the main follows that of *Ms. A* and ends, like it, with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.

In all the subsequent colophons in *DC 22*, the beneficiary of Bihram Sam's (i.e., Ram Zihrun's father's) copying is Kašlanah, not Harbuiah, who only appeared in the second colophon, covering *GR* 14. Such a shift is not totally uncommon, and it demonstrates the compilatory nature of the *Ginza*, with *GR* 1–13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and *GL* each regarded as a separate text, at least for copying purposes. In other words, one may copy one *Ginza* unit for one person and another one for someone else.

Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam, again appears as a scribe in colophon 4. The preceding copyist, Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, used his own father's book, that of Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Baktiar. Both are Kuhailias. But the colophon says that Ram Yuhana's biological father is someone else: the copyist ʿUṣṭad Paiad, son of Nasirʿldin,[19] of the Yahuaia and Rupašia[20] families. It looks as though Ram Yuhana has formed an alliance with the Kuhailias by means of his initiation. Craftsman Paiad, in turn, copied from two books, one of them belonging to the *ganzibra* Yahia Mhatam, son of Sam Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans. This *ganzibra* is one of two brothers; the other is Sam Yuhana, also son of Sam Adam. We find exactly the same brothers, in the same copyist sequence and with the identical phrases, in other colophons, such as Paris *Ms. B* of *JB*.[21] But in *JB*, their scribal predecessors are different than in *DC 22*.

Skipping over colophon 5, I note that in colophon 6 of *DC 22* we find another set of brothers: the oft-encountered Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun (so often invoked together with his son-in-law, Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul), and his older brother Adam Bihram, son of Zakia Mašhadia. The two brothers had different initiators, worked together, and consulted two different books in their copying task.

The rest of the colophons in *DC 22* cohere to a remarkable degreee with those in the parallel colophons in the Paris manuscripts. A convincing number of the exact same phrases, epithets, and blessings are attached in the same spots to the same copyists, beneficiaries, and relatives. For example, the woman copyist and book-owner Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, shows up in colophon 6 in *DC 22*, exactly as she did in the parallel colophon in all the Paris manuscripts.

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[19] These are secular names, and we shall meet craftsman Paiiad in another *Ginza* context later.

[20] This clan name is unknown from elsewhere. It may be a corruption of "Kupašia."

[21] For *JB* colophons, see chap. 11 below.

Ram Zihrun's postscript to GR 18 is brief and lacks information about political and social conditions at the site of his activity, Qurna, the town at the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris, about fifty miles north of Basra. We may safely assume, however, that the internal Mandaean situation is far from tranquil, Ram Zihrun being among the few men fervently working to rescue the Mandaean religion in the year of the cholera. Finishing GR in the month of Nisan in 1831, Ram Zihrun stays at the home of a fellow priest, Zihrun, of the Dihdaria family. Zihrun is the grandson of a ganzibra by the name Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun Adam.[22] Yahia Yuhana is well known, for he occupies the second copyist link in Sfar Malwašia (DC 31) and the third copyist link of The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa (DC 35).[23] Admirably, Ram Zihrun transcribes both of these works in the same year that he transcribes the Ginza, in 1831.

Between *DC 22*'s *GR* and *GL*, two flies long ago became caught as the heavy volume evidently snapped shut. They now lie embedded in the paper, encouraging a peruser of *DC 22* to meditate on the transitoriness of earthly life. The flies appear at a suitable place in the volume, just where the codex turns from *GR* to *GL*, to a focus on ascent and on the soul's hopes and liberated life in the Lightworld. As noted elsewhere, in order to proceed from *GR* to *GL* one must turn the codex around and upside down, for the two sections are arranged like two magical bowls, one upon the other.

Ram Zihrun copies *GL* for the woman Zarip, the beneficiary of his copying of *GR* 14 (but not the rest of *GR*!). As his source he used his own copy of *GL*, one copied from Adam Yuhana, son of Mudalal (Adam Yuhana's secular name is given as "craftsman ʿAbdia"). This *GL* copy is, again, based on that of Ram Zihrun's father, Bihram Sam. The colophon agrees with its equivalents in the Paris manuscripts—except for *Ms. D*, which was clearly cut off, as noted. *DC 22*'s colophon 7 goes beyond Zazai of Gawazta and ends with a garbled Šlama, "son of Qadmai"[24] (estimated time of activity: ca. 200).

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[22] Yahia Yuhana is the uncle of the famous Yahia Bihram, who together with our scribe Ram Zihrun restores the religion.

[23] This is the second text in E. S. Drower, *The Haran Gawaita* and *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa*.

[24] It should be "daughter of Qidra."

As already observed, Ram Zihrun's copying of the *Ginza* must have become interrupted at his colleague's house in Qurna, for he finishes his work on *GL* not in that town but to the south, in Basra. He specifies that he concludes his work on Habšaba,[25] the 5th of Ayar (May), ruled by the sign of Taurus, in AH 1247 (1831).

He includes the usual curse on the Arabs, as he did in the postscript to *GR* 18, and informs his reader that he dwells in the Muslim quarter of the city in the house of a fellow Mandaean, Kiria, son of the priest Zihrun. Perhaps Kiria is a son of the priest Zihrun at whose house in Qurna Ram Zihrun worked earlier.

This postscript gives information on those in power: in Baghdad, ʿAli Pasha reigns. More local rulers are named, and in Persia the Qajar Shah is Fathʿ Alia Shah,[26] says Ram Zihrun. Further, he notes that there is no governor in Basra at the moment. Leaving his sheep and lambs behind in Šuštar,[27] Ram Zihrun went to Qurna in order to be ordained as a *tarmida*, he says. Here, he became a leader of the religion.[28] Trouble involving a disappeared friend led Ram Zihrun to tie together tree-trunks, seemingly in order to flee across the river, but the trunks were rotten and his raft taken "by the rushing waters." There is no way to hide from the evils of this world, he concludes, as he implores Life to look after the Mandaeans: "May the hand of darkness not prevail over us!" He ends with the formula, "Everything is fleeting and unstable, except for prayer and praise. May Life be victorious!"

TWO *GINZAS* IN CALIFORNIA

When Sheikh Dakhil (= Mhatam Zihrun, son of Adam) of Amara, Iraq, lay near death in June 1964, he surprised some members of his family by bequeathing several of his Mandaean texts to his sister's daughter, Lamea Abbas Amara, a poet famous throughout the Arab world. She now lives in San Diego, California.[29] On her mother's side of the family, Lamea and her siblings belong to one of the illustrious priestly lineages, Manduia. I learned of Lamea's family and books when I first arrived at Lamea's residence in

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[25] A copyist will often take care to wrap up his copying work on the holy day of the week.

[26] He ruled from 1797 to 1834.

[27] Whether he means "sheep and lambs" literally or symbolically (i.e., his human flock) is impossible to tell.

[28] True enough: present-day Mandaean priests who list Ram Zihrun in their priestly lineage will often give Ram Zihrun's epithet: "head of the age."

[29] For Lamea and her family, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 2.

December 1992. On a longer visit a year later, I worked on the colophons in her texts.

Among her books are two *Ginza*s. One, from 1886, was written by Lamea's grandfather's brother, Sheikh Idan (= Adam, son of Mhatam Yuhana), while the other one was copied by Sheikh Dakhil himself in 1935. (The younger work relies on the older one.) Hefty volumes both, the books are of similar size, with the 1886 *Ginza* measuring 13¼″ by 9½″. Like the rest of Lamea's Mandaean books, they are kept in white cotton cloth bags containing musk grains—the scent of Life.

Sheikh Idan (= Adam) copies the 1886 *Ginza* for a woman, Hawa, daughter of Maliha. This is her *maṣbuta* name, while her secular name is Farha, daughter of Serhan. Adam's copy is based on one by Ram Zihrun, the copyist of *DC 22*. But Ram Zihrun must have copied at least two *Ginza*s, for upon comparing *DC 22* with the present *Ginza*, it becomes clear that the lineages at the beginning of the two books differ. So, *one* of Ram Zihrun's *Ginza* copies (how many did he manage to make?) was present in Amara, Iraq, in 1886, fifty-five years after Ram Zihrun copied *DC 22* in Qurna and in Basra. His *Ginza*s may have been in great demand in the mid nineteenth century.

According to the 1886 California *Ginza*, Ram Zihrun transcribed this text for a woman, Šarat Simat, daughter of Zarip. This is not the same Zarip for whom Ram Zihrun copied *DC 22*, for the two women have different lineages. The next copyist lineage is that of Zihrun, son of Adam Yuhana.[30] Then, among the following seven lineages of copyists/book-owners/benefactors, there appear Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana, the two women book-owners and priests' daughters familiar to us from *DC 22*. When Mamul made her *Ginza*, she consulted two manuscripts, and one of them was Yasmin Bana's *Ginza*.[31]

After the seven lineages, the colophons in the 1886 *Ginza* begin to intersect with those of *Ms. B* in Paris. The point of confluence is the *ganzibra* Zakia Bayan, son of Yahia Bihram, Šaʿpuria. Just two generations further back in time, at Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Diqnana, Laiit, the colophons in *Ms. A* in Paris and in both of Lamea's two *Ginza*s begin to cohere. From there on, colophon 1 follows its equivalents.[32] The rest of the colophons in both of the California *Ginza*s link up with the others at roughly the same spot, at Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Diqnana, Laiit. Regarding Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, Lamea's 1886 *Ginza* intones "the precious—may his name be exalted!"

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[30] This is not the same Zihrun in whose house Ram Zihrun copied *DC 22*. The two men, both named Zihrun, belong to the same family but have different lineages.

[31] *DC 22* mentioned only *one* text used by Mamul, viz. Yasmin's.

Sheikh Dakhil, son of Sheikh Idan (= Mhatam Zihrun, son of Adam) copied the 1935 *Ginza* for Hawa, daughter of Simat. Mhatam Zihrun is also the copyist, in 1917, of the Baghdad manuscript of *Diwan Nahrawata* ("The Scroll of the Rivers").[33] The 1935 *Ginza* offers a disturbing piece of information: Mhatam Zihrun copied this *Ginza* from a maimed book owned by a *yalufa*. A section of the book had been cut off (was it the colophon, the fate of *GL*'s colophon in *Ms. D*, or a part of the main text?). A "lying Mandaean," as the text has it, had committed this sinful deed, rendering the "powerful and great *Ginza*" incomplete. The *yalufa* book-owner is Zihrun, son of Adam, whose lineage varies considerably in the two *Ginza*s. It turns out to be a very large leap from Mhatam Zihrun, who copies the book in 1935, to Zihrun's copy, for Zihrun appears in the 1886 *Ginza* as directly depending on the 1831 cholera survivor Ram Zihrun. I assume that the *Ginza* had been mutilated between 1831 and 1935, and that nobody wanted to copy it because it was incomplete.

As noted, Lamea's *Ginza*s intersect with *Ms. B* in Paris at the slot of the *ganzibra* Zakia Bayan, son of Yahia Bihram. This is at least three generations removed from *Ms. A*'s and *Ms. D*'s connection point with colophon 1 in the California books. Nowhere in Lamea's *Ginza*s does one find Ram Baktiar, the 1560 copyist of *Ginza Ms. A*.

Arranging the names of one line of priests through three generations in Lamea's family, we find the following:

1. Lamea's mother's brother Mhatam Zihrun (= Sheikh Dakhil) copied the 1935 *Ginza*.
2. Lamea's grandfather's brother Adam (= Sheikh Idan) copied the 1886 *Ginza*; he is the father and initiator of Sheikh Dakhil.
3. Lamea's great-grandfather Mhatam Yuhana (= Sheikh Damouk); he is the father and initiator of Sheikh Idan.

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[32] Compared to the Paris manuscripts, the lineages in Lamea's two *Ginzas* are sometimes a bit garbled.

[33] See Kurt Rudolph's edition and translation, *Der Mandäische 'Diwan der Flüsse*,' 33. The Baghdad manuscript of this text originated in Ahwaz, Iran. Mhatam Zihrun lived in Naṣoriyah, ca. 100 miles west-northwest of Basra, Iraq.

Counting the names in the first lineage in the 1886 *Ginẓa*, one can trace Mhatam Yuhana's lineage fourteen generations back, which would yield a plausible date in the mid fifteenth century for the earliest priest in this particular lineage of the Manduias and ʿKumas. In chapter 2, we saw that other priests, in other clans, can be dated around 1500.

Copyist links 4 and 5 in the first colophon of the 1886 *Ginẓa* clarify a particular problem with a number of Mandaean colophons, namely, how to align secular with priestly names (and, sometimes, *maṣbuta* names, too). Often, if a lineage offers only a secular name, one cannot know what the person's (possibly) priestly or baptismal name is. Sometimes a lineage of, say, ten or eleven names will give three or four secular names, while the rest are baptismal. No secular name is ever preceded by the title "*rba*," of course. But if the secular name *is* that of a priest, there is no way of knowing, unless the term "*rba*" is present. *ʿUstad*,[34] "craftsman," before a name sometimes indicates a layman, a counterpart to "*rba*." But this is not always the case, for *ʿusṭad* can be an honorific term for a priest, too.

Comparing colophons 1 and 4 in the 1886 *Ginẓa* with respect to one particular lineage, that of Bayan, son of Mhatam—copyist no. 4 in the total roster—one finds this correlation, which is only clear in colophon 1:

Colophon 1	Colophon 4
Bayan, son of	
Mhatam, son of	
Yahia, son of	
Adam, who is:	
aṣṭa Kairia, son of	*aṣṭa* Kairia
aṣṭa Rašab, son of	*aṣṭa* Rašab
aṣṭa Haiat	*aṣṭa* Haiat
aṣṭa Adam	*aṣṭa* Adam
aṣṭa Bania, of the sons of	Bania (= Bayan)
Dihdaria, Sabur	
	Mhatam
	Yahia
	Adam

It looks as though colophon 4 reverses the list of names as they appear in the first colophon, and one may assume that by inserting the phrase "who is" after *aṣṭa* Adam in colophon 4, one would end up with the same list of names, but reversed. The four last names in colophon 4 should be turned around and be placed first, in other words.

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[34] The spelling varies wildly: see *MD*, 33a, 344b, and 345a.

Colophon 1's Bayan, son of Mhatam, had an older brother, from whom he copied his *Ginza*. This brother is Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana; the brothers have different initiators. Bihram's lineage, as offered in colophon 4 of the 1886 *Ginza*, helpfully gives both the priestly and the secular names of the four first men in the lineage:[35]

> Bihram, who is *aṣṭa* Aziz, son of
> Adam Yuhana, who is *aṣṭa* Faruk, son of
> Yahia, who is *aṣṭa* Nauruz, son of
> Zihrun, who is *aṣṭa* Kairia, son of Adam Anuš,
> son of an exalted teacher, the precious Mhatam, etc.

It is gratifying to find this doubling of names. For instance, I had earlier encountered ʿUṣṭad Aziz and his lineage in many other colophons, but without knowing the man's other name, Bihram. Henceforth, when either name occurs in isolation in a given colophon, I am able to make an identification. Further on, in this *Ginza*'s colophon 7, a priestly name, Adam Yuhana, is furnished for the craftsman Paiad, but in two other colophons in the California *Ginza*s, only his secular name appeared. The subsequent names in the man's lineage are secular ones only.

Colophon 6 omits Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul but includes his predecessor and father-in-law, Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun, ʿAziz. These two men, together with Yahia Sam's brother, Adam Bahran, son of Zakia Mašhadia, are by now very familiar. At the end, all the California *Ginza* colophons agree with the Paris ones and with *DC 22* (except for the cut-off *GL* colophon in *Ms. D*). However, in Lamea's *GL* colophons, variants occur in some of the earliest names, so that we find Šalma, Zarzai, and Baṭia instead of Šlama, Zazai, and Ṭabia.

The postscript to *GR* 18 in the 1935 *Ginza* of Mhatam Zihrun states that he completed his copying at his own home in the town of Naṣoriyah, in the Mintipiš[36] area, "by the waters of Light-Euphrates of Iraq." King Gazia, son of King Faisal, reigns,[37] and times are chaotic, with killings and confiscation of property. Mhatam Zihrun concludes his postscript to colophon 6 in the 1935 *Ginza* with these words: "And the copy was to here, and there was no more. Life is victorious forever! And victorious be the people of the Naṣoraeans, who do not change any of what Life commanded!"

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[35] In contrast, the *CP*'s first colophon correlates the two first names only (see chap. 9 below).

[36] i.e., "Muntafiq," which is also the name of a Beduin tribal confederation.

[37] A brief reign: 1933–39.

As for the postscript to *GL*, it is even shorter and mentions nothing new. The 1886 *Ginza*'s postscripts are also small. Mhatam Zihrun completed his copying of *GR* 1–18 in Amara, but *GL* was transcribed in Naṣoriyah. At the end of *GL* we find the name of the governor of Istanbul, ʿAbad Hamid,[38] and the ruler of Iran, Nasrudin Shah,[39] but no descriptions of political events.

The 1935 *GL* was copied for a woman named Riiasa, daughter of Šabur (she is designated in relation to her father, and her *maṣbuta* name is not given). For both *Ginza*s, the pattern holds that *GR* and *GL* were copied for different women: Maliha, daughter of Hawa (*GR* 1–18), and Hawa, daughter of Simat (*GL*), in the 1886 *Ginza*, while another Hawa, daughter of (another) Simat, and Riiasa,daughter of Šabur, respectively, are the beneficiaries in the later *Ginza*.

In these *Ginza*s, we find many testimonies to priests and beneficiaries of the Dihdaria, Sabur, and Šapuria clans. The Manduias predominate only at the beginnings, with the other relatives of Lamea. But in colophon 2 (and elsewhere), there are the two relatively early Manduia brothers: the *ganzibra* Yahia Mhatam and Sam, both sons of Sam Adam, Manduia. They live around the year 1500. Among new clan names in the California *Ginza*s are Yahuaiia, Hadiia, and Dizfulias (i.e., "those from Dezful," a town in Khuzistan).

THE *GINZA* IN FLUSHING, NEW YORK

Mr. Nasser Sobbi, born in Khorramshahr, Iran, is a learned Mandaean layman and goldsmith who immigrated to the United States in 1970. On 16 July 1989 he completed a copy of the first and only *Ginza* to be written on the North American continent, as far as I know.[40] The task took four months. The Elmanahi family, another Mandaean family in the New York area, owns the original *Ginza*, which was copied in 1928 for a woman, Lamia Sachet of Qalʿat Saleh, Iraq.[41] Adam Zihrun (i.e., Sh. Abdullah), son of the *ganzibra* Sam, of the family names Manduia and ʿKuma, copied the book; he was a *ganzibra* in Baghdad until his death in 1981.[42]

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[38] The Ottoman Sultan ʿAbdülhamid II (1876–1909).

[39] The Qajar Shah, ruling 1848–96. This Shah is regarded very positively by Iranian Mandaeans, because he protected their ancestors from a cruel, local ruler.

[40] See my *Mandaeans*, chap. 10, on the New York Mandaeans.

[41] Qalʿat Saleh is a village within the jurisdiction of the town Amara. Lamia Sachet is the maternal grandmother of Ms. Suad Elmanahi, of New York and the paternal grandmother of Mr. Ghazi Elmanahi.

When Mr. Sobbi (baptismal name Adam, son of Mahnuš) copied the book, he substitutes his own name and lineage for that of the original beneficiary, Lamia Sachet. Therefore, her name does not appear in the Flushing *Ginza*—except *once*, when Mr. Sobbi forgets to insert his own name and instead keeps hers, and we learn her baptismal name: Šarat, daughter of Yasmin. Of course, Lamia Sachet's name is firmly ensconced in the original *Ginza*, the one from Qalʿat Saleh. Mr. Sobbi, then, copied the book for his own salvific benefit, in full accordance with the tradition. He lists seven ancestors in his own family, Kuhaila.

Adam Zihrun, the copyist in 1928, at Qalʿat Saleh, Iraq, used a book owned by Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun. Ram Zihrun, who worked so hard in the aftermath of the *muṭana*, had among his many initiates this same man, Bihram, who is a copyist of the still unpublished *DC 40*: *The Exorcism of Salt*.[43] Bihram's copy of the *Ginza* was made for a woman named Šarat Simat, daughter of Anhar—secular name Tamam, daughter of Dihdar Abdalah. He used a *Ginza* that he himself had copied for his own mother, Bibia Mudalal,[44] daughter of Hawa Simat and of Adam Yuhana, son of Sam.

We have seen this woman priest, Bibia Mudalal, earlier, and Adam Yuhana, her own father, may have initiated his daughter into priesthood. If he did, she was indeed the only surviving Mandaean priest after the cholera of 1831, but she has not been recognized as such. Or, alternatively: if Bibia Mudalal was initiated after the *muṭana*, someone else was her teacher. In any case, she kept her father's bloodline lineage.[45] It may even have been her own husband, Ram Zihrun, who made her a priest. Lady Drower was told, in the 1930s, that there had been women priests in the past but none within recent memory. It is interesting to think of Sheikh Negm, one of Lady Drower's very close friends, in this connection, because his own grandmother was the priest Bibia Mudalal. But Sheikh Negm never mentioned this to Drower, as far as we know.[46]

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[42] Dr. Sinan Abdullah of Niskayuna, N.Y., is his grandson.

[43] Dr. Michael Tarelko of the University of Minsk, Belarus, is at work on translating this document.

[44] In colophon 3 it becomes clear that Bibia is Bihram's mother, for the grammar in colophon 1 seems muddled. Bibia Mudalal is the sister of Yahia Bihram (see chap. 7 and 8 below).

[45] Later, we will see other examples of this "breach" with priestly tradition, i.e., that a scribe will identify him-or herself according to the "blood lineage" instead of the initiation lineage in cases where the two differ.

Bihram may have inherited the *Ginza* copy from his mother, Bibia Mudalal. Her father—Bihram's maternal grandfather—Adam Yuhana is already familiar to us from other colophons as the prolific copyist of texts such as the liturgies (*DC 53*) in 1802 and *The Great 'First World'* (*DC 41*) in 1809.[47] Bibia Mudalal's book stems from the *ganzibra* Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun, to whom is appended a triple lineage: Dihdaria, Sabur, and Bṭaha (alternative spelling: Baṭahaiia). This *Ginza* is connected to one among several *Ginza*s flowing from the hand of Ram Zihrun, Bibia's husband. Adam Zihrun, who initiated Yahia Yuhana, was the uncle of his pupil. Yahia Yuhana's years of copying activity fell around 1800, for he occupies the third scribal link in *Sfar Malwašia* (copied in 1831 by Ram Zihrun) and the second link in *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa* (in the same year), and he is the third copyist in de Morgan's *Zrazta d̲-Hibil Ziwa* of 1851.

We know that Bihram's own great-great-great-great-grandfather, Zihrun, son of Yahia Mhatam, can be dated to 1677 (AH 1088), when he copied *Zihrun Raza Kasia* (*DC 27*)[48] in Šuštar. Zihrun is also the third scribal link in *Diwan Malkuta ʿLaita* (*DMʿL*) from 1789.[49] Two hundred fifty-one years separate Adam Zihrun, son of Sam, the writer of the Flushing *Ginza* in 1928, from Zihrun, son of Yahia Mhatam, writing in Šuštar in 1677.

Returning to Bihram's mother, Bibia Mudalal, and her copy of the *Ginza* based on that of Yahia Yuhana, one finds that the next scribal link is Zihrun, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans. Here, the Flushing *Ginza* lineages begin to intersect with those of Lamea's *Ginza*s. Zihrun has an older brother, Bihram, also son of Adam Yuhana, and this older brother appears as the next copyist.[50]

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[46] See *MII*, 147, and chaps. 5 and 7 below.

[47] See Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, and *A Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries (Two Priestly Documents): The Great 'First World' and The Lesser 'First World'* (*AAR* and *ARZ,* respectively).

[48] Bogdan Burtea, *"Zihrun, das verborgene Geheimnis." Eine mandäische priesterliche Rolle*. Mandäistische Forschungen 3, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008.

[49] *DC 34*. See my translation of this text, *The Scroll of Exalted Kingship* (*DMʿL*), 71.

[50] The Flushing *Ginza* says that Adam Yuhana (Bibia Mudalal's father) and the current scribe, Zihrun, are brothers, but this is erroneous. They are not of the same family.

Zihrun is the fourth link from the start of Lamea's 1886 *Ginza*. Henceforth the Flushing and California *Ginza*s follow one another. *DC 22*, too, connects with the other *Ginza*s' lineages within a few generations. Regarding *DC 22*, recall that it was bought for Lady Drower by Sh. Negm, whose grandfather is Ram Zihrun. Sheikh Negm's great-grandfather on his mother's side is none other than Adam Yuhana of the Kamisia family. Sheikh Negm offers this information in his 8 November 1938 letter to Lady Drower.[51] Bibia Mudalal, the wife of Ram Zihrun, is the grandmother of the cousins Sh. Negm and Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi (= Kupašia). The latter's priestly name was: Sam, son of Yuhana Bihram, of Ahwaz.

In colophons 4 and 5 we find Yahia Mhatam, son of Sam Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans, who is a copyist of many texts. He copies his *Ginza* from that of his brother Sam Yuhana. These two brothers were initiated by a third, Sam Adam.[52] So, here we find initiations within the same generation. Sam Adam is a famous "father of *ganzibra*s." Lining up the three brothers in parallel fashion yields this correlation:

Yahia Mhatam, son of	Sam Yuhana, son of	
Sam Adam, son of	Sam Adam, son of	Sam Adam, son of
Zakia, son of	Zakia, son of	Zakia, son of
Yahia	Yahia	Yahia

These Manduias had a fourth brother, but he went in a different direction for his initiation: he is Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. It is intriguing to speculate on why Yahia Bayan went to ally himself to the Diqnana priest. Perhaps Sam Adam had died, or perhaps Yahia Bayan did not get along with his brother.

At the end of *GR* 18, the *Ginza* presents the same enigmatic phrase encountered in the equivalent colophons in Lamea's *Ginza*s: that Bihram, son of Sam Gadana, "copied from the *sidra* of the father of the daughter of Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. And the copy was to here, and there was no more." In comparison, *DC 22* specifies, "the father of his daughter, who is Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan." In the first text, our Flushing *Ginza*, the unnamed woman's biological father is not her initiator, for he is Yahia Sam. But according to *DC 22*, it looks like the biological father is Bihram. The Paris *Ginza* manuscripts hardly clarify the matter. *Ms. A* omits the problematic "daughter" altogether and has Bihram, son of Sam Gadana, copy from his grandfather Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. So does *Ms. B*. The only difference regarding *Mss. C* and *D* is that here Bihram's father is Yahia (Sam), son of Sarwan, not Sam Gadana, which again separates biological father and initiator. Why is the daughter unnamed? All of this is puzzling, so far, but she is, as we shall see, a "hidden" priest, for her name is revealed elsewhere.[53]

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[51] See chap. 5 below.

[52] These three brothers belong to the same clan but to a different branch from Lamea's ancestors.

Colophon 6 in the Flushing *Ginza* gives only a brief postscript; the date of completion of *GR* 1–18 is the fifteenth of Akir (January), in the sign of Sagittarius, 1928. The place is Qalʿat Saleh, a village belonging to the greater town of ʿAmara "by the waters of the Tigris, in the governorship of the English and the Arabs." This is the time of the British Mandate in Iraq, and the postscript duly recognizes King George ("Šurš") in London.

Lamia Sachet was not the original beneficiary of *GL* in the Flushing *Ginza*, but instead, a man named Sip (*maṣbuta* name Sam), son of the parents Anhar and Sanap. Designated as father of Mnahi (= Elmanahi, the name of the family that owns the Flushing *Ginza*), Sip (= Sam) is the son of Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun.[54] In the postscript to *GR* 1–13, Ram Zihrun is described glowingly as a "great, lofty, treasured *ganzibra*, a master of *Ginza*s and scrolls, teachings and books and banners (*drabšia*) and a master of seven initiates, a head of the age (*riš d̲-dara*)." Indeed, Ram Zihrun was busy initiating new priests after the cholera.

That the beneficiaries of Adam Zihrun's *GR* and *GL* are different persons mirrors the identical feature in the preceding *Ginza* copy, Ram Zihrun's. At the very end of the *Ginza*, Adam Zihrun writes a lengthy postscript, seemingly on ritual matters having no direct relevance in the present context. Mr. Sobbi does not include this but writes his own postscript in Mandaic, which he then translates into Arabic, Farsi, and English. Here is his last paragraph:

> I wish to thank Mr. Nouri for giving me the opportunity to rewrite—by lending me the Holy book—*sidra*—and pray for all Sobis (Mandaei), the good health, prosperity and have patience when facing difficulties. *Melka rama denhoora wa mari drabotha alitha* [the lofty King of Light and the exalted Lord of Greatness] protect them all *almeh wa heyee zaknen* [forever, and may Life be victorious!].

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[53] See the section on the *Ginza* identified as *Hunt. 6*, below, and see also chap. 8.

[54] This may mean that Sanap, the father, is the secular name of Bihram, the copyist of *DC 40*, *The Exorcism of Salt.*

THE *GINZA* IN LAKE GROVE, NEW YORK

A photocopied *Ginza* in Lake Grove, New York, belongs to a Mandaean, Mr. Mamoon Aldulaimi. It was given to him when he left Baghdad, "to keep him safe," by Sheikh Abdullah of Baghdad, son of Sheikh Negm.[55] The book was not transcribed by Sh. Abdullah, but by a priest who seems to have been one of Sh. Negm's brothers, Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram Zihrun. Yahia Ram Zihrun says that Ram Zihrun is his grandfather, though the latter does not appear as a copyist in the colophons. The date of the text's copying wavers; it is given as both 1937 and 1940.

At the time of writing the book, Yahia Ram Zihrun was fifty-two years old, he says, and he copied the book for a woman—her "body free from menstruation."[56] Her name is Hawa, daughter of Anhar (secular name Mkafaf). Yahia Ram Zihrun used a book owned by a woman, Haašia, daughter of Šafel. The book that she worked from was owned by Bibia Mudalal. From here on, the book's lineage coheres with the others of its kind, except that the scribe makes a giant leap, omitting at least sixteen scribal links between Bihdad Zihrun, son of Sam ʿAsikir (ca. 1300–1400) and a pair of brothers, Šaiar and Sam Ziwa, sons of Bayan Hibil (ca. 750). The gap goes against the pattern in all the other *GR* 1–13 colophons and must be interpreted as an error, for such a close connection between the two lineages is historically impossible.

Like the Flushing *Ginza*, the present one omits the two women, Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana, in its second colophon. In fact, on a number of occasions, the two New York *Ginza*s show closer affinity with one another that with Lamea's two books. Colophon 3 skips Bibia Mudalal and omits a number of lineages in the latter part of the colophon. Similarly, the colophon after *GR* 18 leaves out about eight generations preceding the ubiquitous Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, picking up only at Dihdar Zihrun, son of Sam Sakara.[57]

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[55] Sheikh Abdullah is now in the United Kingdom.

[56] This clause is not uncommon in colophons as regards women. Perhaps there is a preference for copying texts for post-menopausal women, because this implies greater purity.

[57] This scribe is probably identical to Bihdad Zihrun, son of Sam ʿAsakir, just above. Bihdad sometimes appears as a variant of Dihdar, and ʿAsakir and Sakara seem to be variants of the same family name.

Among other peculiarities of Yahia Ram Zihrun's scribal work is that he tends to double the *a* in a number of words. He also divides words in unorthodox places when they do not fit easily at the end of a line. Usually, a scribe will stretch out the letters when necessary to achieve a neat left margin. Another peculiarity is that instead of placing a line of dots under a miswritten or wrong word—the traditional method—Yahia Ram Zihrun surrounds the affected word with dots, making an ellipse around the word.[58]

In his very brief postscript to *GR* 18, the scribe has an unusual phrase as he invokes the book he has just transcribed, "this book of the Lord of Greatness, from the beginning and forever—the teaching at the beginning of the formation of the living waters."[59] This locution clearly demonstrates the notion of "the heavenly book," the prototype created at the dawn of time, at the primordial waters.

In *GL*'s colophon, Bibia Mudalal is said to have copied from a book by Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun,[60] who appeared as the second copyist link in the first colophon in the Flushing *Ginza*. But concerning *GR* 14 (and other texts), Bibia Mudalal copies this one from another book, that of the *ganzibra* Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun. This copyist stems from the families Dihdaria and Sabur, while Bibia's own father's families are Kamisia and Riš Draz. She herself married into yet another cluster of clans: Buhair, ʿAziz, and Kupašia.

The *GL* colophon gives a different sequence than the Flushing *Ginza* with respect to scribes in the generations around Bibia Mudalal. However, the lineages involve the same family names and probably demonstrate copyings within the same time period. This colophon also offers a helpful addition to the lineage of *aṣṭa* ʿAziz. He appears two lineages earlier than Bibia Mudalal, which makes possible a correlation of the Lake Grove *Ginza* colophon with information from the 1886 California *Ginza*:

Lake Grove *Ginza*	**1886 California *Ginza***
aṣṭa ʿAziz (=Bihram), son of	
aṣṭa Nuruz, son of	(Nuruz = Yahia)
aṣṭa Faruk (=Adam Yuhana, son of)	
aṣṭa Kairia, son of	(Kairia = Zihrun)
aṣṭa Badur, son of	(Badur = Yahia Bayan)
R. Mhatam, Sabur	

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[58] Nasser Sobbi follows Yahia Ram Zihrun's practice.

[59] For the word "formation," *kimṣa*, which has caused much headache for translators of Mandaic, see *MD*, 213a–b (note especially its references to *JB*).

[60] This would mean that she copies from one of her husband's initiates.

For the most part, this fits with the correlations shown in the California *Ginza* earlier in this chapter, though the fourth colophon in the California *Ginza* fits even better. But that *Ginza*'s *GL* colophon replaces the fifth scribe, Badur (= Yahia Bayan) with Adam Anuš. The craftsman ʿAziz, at the start of the list above, is the older brother of Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun. The two have another brother, younger than Bihram: Bayan, son of Mhatam. His name marks a scribal link in the California *Ginza*s. All three men have different initiators, thereby probably forging alliances to different clans.

Yahia Ram Zihrun (or perhaps anonther scribe before him) makes another leap in his enumeration of scribal lineages, for in *GL*, he skips twenty lineages in the last third of the colophon. The leap begins with Bihram BrHiia, son of Adam Zakia (ca. fifteenth century),[61] ending right before the sons of Bayan Hibil (mid 700s).[62] Because of the sheer magnitude of the mishap, I wonder whether the scribe overlooked an entire page in the original. In the postscript to *GL*, no city or other geographical specifications are offered. The year is 1937 (although Yahia Ram Zihrun says "1940") (AH 1356), and the scribe includes the usual curse on the Arabs. He also gives the years according to *both* Arab and Western computations, a feature found in more recent Mandaean manuscripts, clearly a result of the increasingly bicultural situation, Western and Arab.

THE AUSTRALIAN *GINZA*

The Australian *Ginza*, published to coincide with the feast of Panja (the intercalary five-day feast), in March 1998, in Sydney, New South Wales, is the first printed *Ginza*.[63] The Mandaic fonts were developed in Australia, and similar fonts have been manufactured in the United States and also in Iraq. The book is based on the collation of three *Ginza* manuscripts. Judging by the colophons in the printed product, I assume that the finished book stems, in the main, from one by Mhatam Zihrun, son of Adam. This scribe, as we have seen in the section about the California *Ginza*s, is identical to Sh. Dakhil, the maternal uncle of Lamea Abbas Amara. Dating to

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[61] This is Bihram BrHiia "the elder," as I call him, because he has a nephew by the same name but with a different initiator. These men are Kuhailias and well-known scribes.

[62] More is said about Bayan Hibil and his sons later, especially in chaps. 9 and 12.

[63] M. F. Mubaraki, R. H. M. Saeed, and B. Mubaraki, eds., *Ginza Rba*.

1898, this *Ginza* is thirty-seven years older than his copy now in California, for that one was transcribed in 1935. Because Sh. Dakhil died in 1964, he must have been very young when he copied the 1898 *Ginza*. Indeed, he was born in 1878, and he was therefore twenty years old in 1898. The two *Ginza*s are not based on the same copy, for while the 1935 book is copied by Sh. Dakhil's own grandfather, Sh. Damouk, the 1898 one derived from Zihrun, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Sabur clan.

The Sydney editors also consulted a second *Ginza* in Australia, one by the cholera survivor Ram Zihrun, who copied his book in Šuštar in 1843. And the third *Ginza* used by the editors comes from the hand of Sam, son of Zihrun, of the Manduia and ʿKuma families. But here there is no information about time and place of transcription.

Because the two *Ginza*s by Sh. Dakhil (the 1935 one in San Diego and the 1898 one used in Australia) do not stem from the same text, the scribal lineages in them differ. There are several spelling mistakes, as well as a number of other errors, in the colophons in the printed *Ginza*. Whether these mistakes stem from Sh. Dakhil himself, or from someone else, is impossible to say without consulting the original 1898 *Ginza*. A couple of the seven colophons do not conform at their earliest stage to those of other *Ginza*s. While colophon 1 ends with the familiar Ram, who is here identified as Ram Daimir, but then the text continues "and Šailia." This looks like a variant of Ram Šilai, son of Daimir, which is the normal ending for colophon 1. But the Australian *Ginza* splits the copyist into two persons.

The 1898 *Ginza* is copied for the benefit of a woman, Biniia, daughter of Dihla (her *maṣbuta* name is: Šarat, daughter of Hawa Simat).

Mhatam Yuhana (= Sh. Damouk), from whom his grandson Mhatam Zihrun copied the *Ginza*, used as his model a book by Yahia Zihrun, son of Yahia Ram Zihrun, Sabur and Baṭahaiia clans. We will meet this teacher, Yahia Ram Zihrun, again, in subsequent chapters (he must not be confused with the eponymous brother of Sheikh Negm, who wrote the *Ginza* that Mr. Sobbi worked from). This Yahia Ram Zihrun was a scribe active in and around 1818, and the copyist of an extraordinary Mandaean scroll, one that has seldom been mentioned by Western scholars.[64]

As noted, the *Ginza* text was copied for Biniia. In the first colophon, other women appear: the book-owners Šhun, daughter of Disfulia, and Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam Garib. The latter woman was present in the *DC 22 Ginza*, which gave a longer lineage for her. This *Ginza*'s copyist lineage begins to cohere with its equivalents at the ubiquitous father-in-law of Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, the *ganzibra* Yaha Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. Three scribal links prior to Yahia Sam we find Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia. This Zihrun is, in all likelihood, the *ganizbra* in Huwaiza around 1560, if we recall the information of Paris *Ginza Ms. A*'s scribe, Ram Baktiar. In terms of time, this would fit well. Zihrun's *Ginza* copy was one of three consulted by his successor, Yahia Yuhana, possibly a fellow-initiate of Zihrun, because both are sons of Ram, Kuhailia.[65]

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[64] Yahia Ram Zihrun and this scroll are dealt with in chap. 13.

The first of the three *Ginza* copies is judged to be erroneous, defective, "*šugiana*."[66] Diplomatically, Yahia Yuhana omits the name of the copyist/owner of the defective *Ginza*. Further on in the roster of scribes, at Ram Ziwa, son of Šaiar, a surprising epithet is appended to Ram Ziwa: "There was no truth in him." Ram Ziwa, who lived around 800, was the grandson—on his mother's side—of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, is famous scribe, and Ram Ziwa has, it seems, shed disgrace on his illustrious family.

The abnormal ending of colophon 1 has already been noted. Colophon 2 is suspect for a different reason: the end has been forced into the mold of the first colophon, a tactic I have not seen earlier. Is this an ill-considered choice in order to make the two rosters cohere? We do not know. Normally, the second *Ginza* colophon ends with the fellow-initiates Šadan, Banan, and Bihram, sons of Brik Yawar. But here they are absent, and instead, *two* men, Ram Daimir and Ram Šilai, appear—double errors!

The beneficiary of *GR* 15, covered by colophon 3, is the woman Himian (*maṣbuta* name: Mudalal, daughter of Hawa). Both Mhatam Zihrun (the grandson) and Mhatam Yuhana (the grandfather) copied for the salvific benefit of women: Biniia and Himian. Himian is the daughter of ʿAtuan, a man who was a beneficiary in colophon 1 of the present *Ginza*. Hawa Simat, the book-owner, appears again, as she did in colophon 2. A scribe familiar to us but who was not in colophon 1 now shows up: Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. Colophon 3 ends in the normal manner, with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. But other errors leap to the eye: the name of Yahia Papia (initiator of Adam) is misspelled "Pakai," and Haiašum, son of Sku Hiia, suffers on two counts. His name is cut into two, Haia and Šum, and the first part of his initiator's name, "Sku," is simply omitted. Both Adam, son of Yahia Papia, and Haiašum live during what I dub the "obscure centuries."[67]

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[65] Yahia Yuhana is a famous copyist, encountered in many colophons.

[66] *MD*, 453a.

In the third colophon in the Australian *Ginza*, we see that Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram Kuhailia, copied from his father, *ʿuṣṭad* Paiiad, son of Nasruddin, of the Yahiauia and ʿUpašia[68] clans. It was Yahia Yuhana who was so diplomatic, earlier, by not stating the name of the *yalufa* responsible for the defective *Ginza*. Yahia Yuhana is also the coeditor of *DC 36*, *Haran Gawaita* (*HG*). He was initiated by a person other than his biological father, who is Paiiad (a secular name). Paiiad occupies the second copyist slot in *Hunt. 6*, the truly massive *Ginza* treated next in the current chapter. Because *Hunt. 6* was copied in 1615, we can date Paiiad around 1600.

ʿUṣṭad Paiiad used two books when he copied the current *Ginza*. One of them came from the hand of *ganzibra* Yahia Mhatam, son of Sam Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma families. Yahia Mhatam is attested as a scribe in the *Ginza* from Flushing and in two *JB*s (*Ms. B* in Paris and *DC 30*), plus the Mandaean marriage manual *Šarh d̠-Qabin d̠-Šišlam Rba*.[69] One of three brothers, Yahia Mhatam copied from the book of his brother Sam Yuhana, also a son of Sam Adam, Manduia and ʿKuma. However, as we have observed, the third brother is none other than Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. By combining information in colophons 3 and 4—and remembering the information in the Flushing *Ginza*—one can produce this "family picture."

The editor Hawa, daughter of Yahia (alternative name: Yuhana), appears in the customary spot. Between her and a seemingly second Hawa, daughter of Adam Kuhailia, we have the scribe Bayan, son of Adam Šupartaiia. But this second Hawa must be wrong. There is no Hawa, daughter of Adam Kuhailia, for this is a scribal error for a much-encountered "Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia." Perhaps the scribe was influenced by already having written "Hawa." In any case, this is nothing but a flagrant mistake, for Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, appears so often *precisely* in this spot in colophons, and with the same neighboring scribes, that a sudden Hawa makes no sense.

In the beginning of colophon 5, the verbal form "copied" is often wrong: "*ansat*" for "*ansa*." Frequently, we find that it is easy for a copyist, when he first starts his task, speaking about his own activities, to slip into the first person singular of the verb and use it when it is no longer applicable. As a positive feature of this colophon we find, near its beginning, that the lineage of Sh. Dakil is specified as containing three priests who were "fathers of *ganzibras*" —that is, priests who initiated *tarmidas* who later reached *ganzibra* status. This is an impressive record.

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[67] See chap. 12 below, in which I try to obtain a grip on the scribes belonging to the period ca. 400–700.

[68] The latter is perhaps a new clan name, though it may be an error for "Kupašia."

[69] E. S. Drower, *Šarh d̠-Qabin d̠-Sislam Rba* (*DC 38*).

Now, back to the genuine Hawa, we see that colophon 5 is very direct in identifying her as "Hawa, who is the pupil of Yahia, son of Yuhana,[70] son of Sarwan." It is not often that we find such a forthright expression about a woman's initiation relationship. For Hawa's identity is sometimes suppressed. Her editorial role, "*maknušta*," does not appear here, but it does in colophon 6. At times, "*maknušta*" is transmogrified into a family name, or the word is attached—in feminine verbal form—to a male scribe.

Colophon 6 is also corrupt regarding the genuine Hawa. We find, "the book that Hawa, daughter of Adam Kuhailia, daughter of Yuhana, son of Zakia, edited (*maknušta*)." Of course, Adam Kuhailia cannot be a "daughter" of Yuhana. Earlier than Hawa, another woman copist turns up: Mamania, daughter of Hibil. Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, shows up as copyist in this colophon no less than four times (or, probably, his book was used four times). This is an example of much copying within the same time period. In one of his copying rounds, Yahia consulted a *Ginza* that "fell from"[71] Mamania. She and Yahia copy from one another, just as Hawa, daughter of Yahia, and Bayan, son of Adam Šupartaiia, tend to copy from one another's work. Colophon 6, which covers the Mandaean "world history" in *GR* 18, shows that this document was copied very often within a relatively short time span.

A peculiar feature of the Australian *Ginza*'s sixth colophon is its many punctuation marks. They appear in the most inappropriate places. Perhaps they indicate that the colophon is corrupt. The marks begin appearing during Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul's slot, and I can find no explanation for them.

The conclusion to the last colophon, the seventh, would have been regular were it not for the curious feature that Šlama, daughter of Qidra, is here called "son of Qadmaiia," that is, "son of the first." This makes no sense. In other *GL* colophons, the wording is "father of Šlama, daughter of

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[70] Right here, we see how the oft-met compression of names in Hawa's lineage happens: Yahia and Yuhana are separate persons here, and Hawa is the pupil of the former.

[71] i.e., "derived from"; *MD*, 449a, s.v. *ŠDA* I.

Qidra.” Also, as attested elsewhere, the father is unnamed, a feature I take to indicate avoidance of a named woman as the earliest scribe (she belongs around the year 200).

Near its opposite end, the colophon says that Mhatam Yuhana (= Sh. Damouk) copied his *GL* from one written by Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana. This Yahia Bihram is the cholera survivor, brother of Bibia Mudalal and cousin and brother-in-law of Ram Zihrun. I have not seen Yahia Bihram as a copyist of any other part of the Ginza before,[72] so this is interesting information.

Three new women appear in *GL*’s colophon, one as a beneficiary and two as book-owners (the latter two are probably not priests). Rdapa (“persecution”), daughter of Šadir, is the beneficiary of Yahia Bihram’s scribal task, while Sita, daughter of Sahal and Nura, daughter of ʿAbas,[73] own books. Then the (possible) priest Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam, shows up as *Ginza* owner and copyist. She may be dated around 1700. In colophon 3, she was cocopyist with Sam Yuhana, son of Yahia Adam, of the ʿAsikir clan.

As in all *GL* colophons that I have seen, when the roster arrives at ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, the term “*sidra*” (book), changes to “*šapta*” (scroll). At Ṭaiba (error for: Ṭabia), son of Zazai, the term again shifts, this time to “*kdaba*” (writing). Also, the scribe Miriai, daughter of Simat Miriai,[74] owns the *GL* used by ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Ruzba, son of Hawa, appears in this colophon two scribal links earlier than Miriai. Miriai and Ruzba have female initiators. Perhaps these names designate initiation relationships.[75]

There are few new clan names in the Australian *Ginza*, and only two are noteworthy. Both appear in the context of a beneficiary’s lineage and therefore are not necessarily known as priest clans: Barišia and Furišia. We also find Baugania, in a priestly context, and this name is found in other colophons. An early one, Mušarah, appears here, as it does elsewhere, fairly early. Beyond a certain point, which cannot be identified more precisely here, clan names are for the most part absent in colophons. But scribes such as Mhatam Zihrun, son of Bihram Mušarah; Bihram Bayan, of the Šupartaiia clan; and Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, live during a period of vigorous scribal activity.[76] They are attested, not only here in the Australian *Ginza*, but in many other scribal lineages as well.

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[72] But see the next chapter!

[73] None of these are baptismal names, and the lineages consist of secular names only.

[74] The mother’s name is usually only “Simat.”

[75] See my arguments in chap. 8 below on women priests.

HUNT. 6

Robert Huntington, born 1636 or 1637, became a chaplain to the Levant Company in Aleppo, Syria, in 1670. He remained in the East for ten years, building up a great collection of Oriental manuscripts.[77] Returning home and leaving his document collection, along with coins, to the Bodleian Library, Huntington had also procured manuscripts for other collectors, such as Thomas Marshall, whom we shall encounter later. After becoming provost at Trinity College, Dublin, Huntington fled from Ireland but returned after the 1690 Battle of the Boyne. He died in 1701.[78]

Among the manuscripts is *Hunt. 6*, an enormous codex, a *Ginza* seemingly neglected since it was listed in Payne Smith's catalogue.[79] The volume measures 12 by 16 by 3 inches, contains 536 pages, and is bound in brown leather turning reddish. Some of the thick, water-stained, and hole-ridden pages have wavy edges like a washboard. The script is magnificently even and clear (though the colophons and postscripts do not preserve the same high quality). The hefty book is best handled when placed at an incline;[80] otherwise, in order to read it, one must stand up and hover above the book.

Dating to 1615—a time between Paris *Ginza Ms. A* (1530) and Paris *Ginza Ms. B* (1632)—the book seems to have lost the beginning, for the text begins haphazardly.[81] The first folio is in fact missing. Oddly, *GR* and *GL* run in sequence, and one does not have to turn the codex upside down, as one must do in all other *Ginza*s that I have seen so far. Adam Paraš, son of Zihrun, of the families ʿUbadia and Baṭahaiia, copied the book in Basra, on the city's ʿAšar channel. The scribe is known from *JB*'s Paris *Ms. A*,[82] but I have not seen him elsewhere in colophons. He transcribed for the benefit of ʿUṣṭad ʿIdar, son of Ganim. In colophon 2, we learn both of ʿIdar's other names: Yahia Sam, son of Yahia Sam, maṣbuta name: Yahia Sam, son of Anhar.

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[76] See chap. 12 below.

[77] He did not do this as early as the 1660s, contrary to the information given by F. C. Burkitt, "Mandaeans" in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1954 ed., 788b.

[78] This information comes from the Bodleian's catalogue *Miscellaneous Mss. and Minor Donations*, p. 742.

[79] R. Payne Smith, *Catalogus Codicum Syriacorum*, Codd. Mendaei, pp. 645–47. Three Mandaean manuscripts are listed (nos. 202–4); *Hunt. 6* is no. 203. On p. 646, Payne Smith says that *Hunt. 6* has been identified as *Codex Nasaraeus* and *Liber Adami* (i.e., as a *Ginza*).

[80] The Oriental Reading Room provides slanted foam "pillows" for this very purpose.

[81] At first glance, it looks as though another page has been cut out, between pp. 210 and 211, but this may be the result of the binding process.

Adam Paraš used a *Ginza* belonging to ʿUṣṭad Paiad, son of Naṣrudin, of the Yahiauia family, whom we have encountered before. ʿUṣṭad Paiad forms scribal link no. 11 in colophon 4 of the Australian *Ginza*. None of the adjacent scribes are identical in the two *Ginza*s. In *Hunt. 6*, ʿUṣṭad Paiad says that he copied from the *ganzibra* Ram, son of Yahia, Kuhailia. He, in turn, used two books, and one of them[83] belonged to Yahia Mhatam, whose initiator remains unnamed. But Yahia Mhatam may be one of the four Manduia and ʿKuma brothers we have seen earlier; Yahia Mhatam's brothers are Sam Yuhana, Sam Adam, and Yahia Bayan, the latter initiated by Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. Alternatively, we may have on our hands a different Yahia Mhatam, son of Anuš, of the sons of Danqa and Šapaiia families. According to Ram Baktiar, the copyist of Paris *Ginza Ms. A*, this Yahia Mhatam is the head of all Mandaeans in 1560 and lives in Huwaiza. The two men named Yahia Mhatam live roughly at the same time period, but we cannot be certain which one is meant in the present context of colophon 1.

The first colophon in *Hunt. 6* begins to follow that of Paris *Ms. A* at Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. The same pattern obtains in other *Ginza*s. The son-in-law and father-in-law constellation of Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul and Yahia Sam appears here, as so often. The priest "in whom there is no truth," according to the Australian *Ginza*, belongs here too: Ram Ziwa, son of Šaiar. But *Hunt. 6* omits Ram Ziwa's epithet. Ram Šilai concludes this colophon, as in other *Ginza*s. But right before Ram Šilai, at the mention of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, who copied from Ram Šilai, Adam Paraš has a telling expression: "Then, those *zhara*s (i.e., name insertions) were copied from an old book" in the library of Ram Šilai. To refer to the names (but which ones?) as *zhara*s in a colophon shows that they carried ritual weight, conjuring up the presence of Mandaeans long departed.[84] The list of names is lost, and they must have been present in the ancient book in Ram Šilai's library. "And Ram Šilai copied from the Life, the first ancestors," so Adam Paraš concludes.

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[82] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 279.

[83] The second book was owned by Bihram BrHiia, "the younger," son of Adam Kuhailia.

[84] See my Afterword regarding the liturgical significance of the name lists.

When one compares the sheer number of scribal links in Paris *Ms. A*, from 1560, with those in *Hunt. 6*, from 1615, it turns out that there are thirty-four links (not counting the beneficiaries' names) in Paris *Ms. A*, while only twenty-three appear in *Hunt. 6*. Because these are the two oldest *Ginza*s in European collections, it is interesting to make such a comparison. A close inspection reveals that Paris *Ms. A* was copied several times within the same time period, around the year 1300, much more extensively than *Hunt. 6* during the same time. For instance, the famous Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia—a very busy scribe—occurs only once in *Hunt. 6*'s first colophon but three times in the Paris *Ginza*.

Colophon 2 furnishes a possible answer to the question of which Yahia Mhatam we encountered in colophon 1. Here, Yahia (Mhatam) is identified as a Manduia family member, which secures him as one of the four brothers, not the Kuhailia "head of all Mandaeans" in the Huwaiza region at the time of Ram Baktiar. Three of the four brothers are mentioned as scribes in colophon 2, althought Yahia Bayan is still not identified as brother of the others.

The well-known Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil,[85] copied *GR* 14 from his biological father, a man who was not his initiator, and whom I have not seen before: Dihdar, by the name of Mhatam Zihrun Bihram, of the Zarzuia family. We do not know why Yahia Sam was not initiated by his own father, but his initiator also belonged to the Zarzuias and the ʿAziz clan. By sheer coincidence, Yahia Sam's father and father-in-law, the famous Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, both carry the name Dihdar.

Like the Paris *Ginza Ms. B*, the last segment of colophon 2 in *Hunt. 6* states that Ram Ziwa Bihram, son of Bayan Hibil, is the nephew of the earliest scribe(s) of *GR* 14, Šaʿadan and Bayan Bihram, sons of Brik Yawar. (Whether both were his uncles, we cannot know for certain). Ram Ziwa Bihram's initiator, Bayan Hibil, was, in his turn, the initiate of Brik Yawar, a fact known from many colophons.[86]

In colophon 3, Adam Paraš says that he copies from two books, one of them owned by Paiad Nasrudin (a compression of Paiad, son of

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[85] Here there is an error: Yahia Sam's initiator is given as Anuš, but this is evidence of skipping a link in the lineage.

[86] The valuable statement by Bayan Hibil regarding the work of gathering and correlating the Mandaean liturgies in early Islamic times is treated in chap. 9.

Naṣrudin). ʿUṣṭad Paiad's *maṣbuta* name is supplied here—it was not given in the previous colophon. According to the colophon, Adam Paraš copied from two books, and the owner[87] of one of them copied from Yahia Yuhana, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. Either Yahia Yuhana is an error for Yahia Bayan, or we have just discovered another initiate of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. The colophon is relatively regular and fits with others after *GR* 15. For instance, it follows colophon 3 of the Australian *Ginza* almost exactly, with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana as the earliest scribe. Two generations removed from him comes Hawa, daughter of Nukraya, as elsewhere in colophon 3.

Glancing at the colophons in Paris *Mss. A* and *B* when reading those of *Hunt. 6*, one sees that the similarities between the latter and *Ms. A* are stronger at the beginning than with *Ms. B*. This is so, even though fifty-five years separate *Hunt. 6* from Paris *Ms. A* (1615 and 1560), while only seventeen years divide *Hunt. 6* from *Ms. B*. All three books were transcribed in Basra, though *Ms. B*'s *GR* 18 hails from Maqdam, a village in the Huwaiza region.

In colophon 4, ʿUṣṭad Paiad, son of Naṣrudin, copied from two books, one of them owned by Bihram, Kuhailia (as in colophon 1), and the other one by Bihram, son of Ram, of the Manduias. This last copyist is unknown from other scribal rosters. Immediately, the next link is Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. Because this connecting point to Yahia Bayan occurs very soon in colophon 4, it perhaps indicates that *GR* 16 was copied only rarely in this particular scribal tradition. Hawa, the known editor, suffers from identity obfuscation in colophon 4, for "*maknušta*" ("edited," "gathered") does not appear, but instead we find the misspelling "*makušta*." Hawa is not named; instead, the text serves up the garbled expression "his pupil, Yuhana Zakia, Makušta." This error is perpetuated in other colophons, too. "Makušta" is appended—for the second time, in the same colophon—to Sam Hibil, "son of Adam Makušta." Now it really looks like a family name, which is wrong. At the end, we find assurances that the colophon was not cut off, and that this was all there was of the manuscript.

In contrast to colophon 4, the fifth one does not hide Hawa's identity but straightforwardly says, "the book that Hawa, daughter of Yuhana, son of Zakia, edited." Hawa's predecessor is the ubiquitous Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia. The endings of colophons 4 and 5 are normal. An odd feature of

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[87] Although the text, erroneously, says "I copied," referring to Adam Paraš himself.

Hunt. 6 is that the spot for inserting the beneficiary's name is left vacant, except in colophon 1.[88] Probably, the scribe meant to insert it later.

Praise is heaped on the *ganzibra* Ram, son of Yahia Baktiar, Kuhailia, who is the third scribal link in the sixth colophon. In other places, he is called "a father of *ganzibra*s," but here he is lauded as "a precious son of a pure nest (i.e., family)." Ram can be dated around 1580.[89] As elsewhere in *Hunt. 6*, we find abbreviated lineages; for instance, the *Ginza* owned by the just-mentioned Ram, son of Yahia Baktiar, depended on books by two men named Adam, one a Kuhailia and one a Manduia. The Manduia priest (Sam) Adam, is the initiator of his two brothers Yahia Mhatam and Sam Yuhana (but not of the fourth brother, Yahia Bayan), as we have seen repeatedly, and Adam Kuhailia is probably the initiator of Bihram Brhiia. The time period fits both Adams, but the abbreviation remains unfortunate.

Bad errors mar this colophon, but one may restore the text by consulting the parallel colophons to *GR* 18. Hawa, the editor, is again obscured, transformed into a "son." But we know enough to fill in the gaps; there is no "son of Yuhana," but a named daughter. Close to the end of colophon 6, Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, turns up, as expected, without fuzziness. But the earliest scribe, "the father of the daughter of Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan," remains a riddle. This is a highly irregular expression. Perhaps the daughter *is* Šadia Mamania, but if so, her lineage diverges from the information given above. It may be that her initiator and her biological father are not the same, of course. Or, we may have on our hands another "hidden woman," an unnamed female scribe. Comparisons with other examples of *Ginza* colophons no. 6 do not help much.[90] In the previous colophon, no. 5, *Hunt. 6* even provided Yahia Sam with a male initiate, Anuš, which further obscures the daughter. "And the copy was to here. And blessed be the people of the Naṣuraiia, who altered nothing of what the Life commanded." So ends colophon 6.

Lastly, the seventh colophon, after *GL*, reveals that Adam Paraš copied from no fewer than three books: one by Adam Yuhana, son of Anhar (we know that Adam Yuhana is identical to Paiad, son of Naṣr/Naṣruddin); one by Paraš, son of Naṣr; and the third one was his own. The latter book, it seems, depended on a *GL* by a priest Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar, Durakia. Yahia Šaiar is known as a prolific copyist: of *ATŠ*,[91] *ARR*, *MHZ*,[92] *GR* in Paris *Ms. B*, and two *JB* manuscripts: Paris *Ms. B*, and Mr. Sobbi's *JB*.[93] However, he is new as a copyist of *Hunt. 6*. The next link yields our old friend Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana, is Yahia Sam's predecessor in this roster. But here Yahia Bayan is said to be the pupil of Yahia Sam.

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[88] This does happen in other colophons, too (see chap. 4 below).

[89] For the basis for calculations, see chap. 12 below, on his great-grandson, the priest Zakia Zihrun, active in 1677.

[90] See chap. 8 on women priests. None of the Paris *Ginza* manuscripts have the daughter clause at all, and we find compressed statements and lineages in all four.

Now, this is highly unusual, for we know that Yahia Sam was not his initiator, but Yahia Sam may have been among the priests required to elevate Yahia Bayan into priesthood. In this particular context, at the mention of Sam Diqnana, the epithet "Laiit" is not included. The expression is, "Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, ʿAziz, who copied it for his pupil, whom he made priest: Yahia Bayan, son of Sam, Zihrun Diqnana." Sam's name is wrong ("Zihrun" is out of place in this context), and I must conclude that this part of the colophon is corrupted.

Three copyist links prior to Yahia Bayan comes Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan. The colophon states that the initiator, Adam Bayan, son of Šadan Zarzuia, was Sarwan Bulbul's older brother. So, the elder of the two in fact initiated his own brother. The Australian *Ginza* makes this relationship even clearer, as we have seen. The colophon follows other *GL* lists, and Adam Paraš supplies names of his relatives at the end. Absent is the beneficiary's name, as we have already observed.

There is a large open space in the manuscript before Adam Paraš says, "I sealed this in the city of Basra."[94] He resides, he says, on the city's channel ʿAšar, and he takes care to conclude his transcription on Habšaba, a good omen. As noted, the year is 1615, the Ottoman ruler being Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617), a great-great-grandson of Sulayman I Kanuni (r. 1520–1566). This Sulayman is probably the one who was lauded by Ram Baktiar in Maqdam, Huwaiza, in 1560 (Paris *Ms. A*). In *Hunt. 6*, Adam Paraš identifies Sulayman's ancestor Bayzid Naual (r. 1481–1512) as a Turk.[95] Adam Paraš states that there are four good emirs, whom he lists by name: Aprasiab, Alia Aga, Mustapa, and Alia Paša. Seventeen years later, in 1632, the postscript in Paris *Ms. B* identified Aprasiab as Sultan of Basra.[96] The Mandaean priest even asks his Lord, that is, the Mandaean one, to protect these rulers (especially Aprasiab, it seems) from everything evil.

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[91] E. S. Drower, *The Thousand and Twelve Questions (Alf Trisar Šuialia)* (*ATŠ*).

[92] In E. S. Drower, *The Haran Gawaita* and *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa* (*MHZ*).

[93] For the colophons in *JB*, see chap. 11. Colophons in the first three mentioned texts are treated to various extents in chaps. 12 and 13.

[94] In the postscript, the scribe has a peculiar habit of adding the letter *a* at the beginning of many words. The postscript is not entirely clear.

[95] All the dates for rulership come from Bachrach, *Near East Studies Handbook*, 52. For "Turk," see *MD*, 430a, s.v. *rum* 1.

The Mandaeans in Basra have five *ganzibra*s and thirty *tarmida*s,[97] according to Adam Paraš, but the positive tone regarding the (Shiʿa extremist Mushaʿshaʿ) rulers is dampened by the information that follows next. The Mandaeans wish to build a *mandi*, a plan that produces a tense relationship with the local non-Mandaean population. "How much the knowledge is cut off and severed!" Adam Paraš laments. Mandaeans suffer, and even Adam Paraš, a priest, is forced to take up weapons, for which he anxiously implores for forgiveness. Eight Mandaeans died, but the First Life was not cut off (i.e., there was not a complete massacre), says Adam Paraš. Still, he continues, the community is withered. Here, he uses the verb for "drying up" (*YBŠ*). But he urges the Mandaeans to persevere.

Appealing to "our brothers who are coming after us"—a common expression in colophons—Adam Paraš admits that conditions were so bad that some Mandaeans converted to Christianity. It is quite rare to see such forthright information about conversion in a Mandaean colophon.[98] "And I and my brother, my teacher Zihrun, sought after our *ganzibra*s and *tarmida*s and the entire family of the Mandaeans," he says. In Huwaiza also, the people are oppressed, and here they are also not recognized as a legitimate religion, it seems. The local governor, Mubarak,[99] kills Mandaeans and removes priests from office. "Know this, O our brothers who are coming after us!" So Adam Paraš concludes his postscript.

One may rightly admire the fortitude of a priest who is still able, under such conditions, to keep working, transcribing the beautiful and massive volume at hand, and trusting in the First Life.

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Now come two charts. Figure 3.1 shows how few correlations there are between the California 1886 *Ginza* and *DC 22* until we arrive at the oftrepeated confluence of scribes around the year 1500. Figure 3.2 displays the scribal connections between all the *Ginza*s treated in this chapter and in chapter 2.

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[96] See chap. 2 above.

[97] Unless this is an exaggeration (which I doubt), it shows how important Basra is as a Mandaean center at the time.

[98] But we shall see it again, in other chapters.

[99] He died the next year, 1616.

In the next chapter, I move to describe a specific "library expedition" yielding more *Ginza*s.

Figure 3.1

Two columns correlate the names at the start of colophons 1 of the 1886 California *Ginza* and of *DC 22*.

Note that there is only *one* correlation, that of Ram Zihrun, son of Bihram Sam, before we arrive at the confluence of scribes around the year 1500, with Yahia Sam, son of Hibil Zihrun, and Yahia Bayan, son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana.

In order to shorten the long lineages, I mostly give only the two first names and the last one in each lineage, but I indicate the number of names I omit.

1886 California Ginza	
Adam (= Sh. Idan), s. of	
Mhatam Yuhana, s. of	
(omitting 12 names)	
Sam, Manduia, ʿKuma,	
copied for:[100]	
Maliha (=Parha), d. of	
Hawa,	
Adam copied from:	
	DC 22, 1831
Ram Zihrun, s. of[101]	Ram Zihrun, s. of
Bihram Sam, s. of	Bihram Sam, etc.
(omitting 11 names)	
Yahia, ʿAziz, Kupašia,	
for:[102]	for:[103]

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[100] i.e., beneficiary.

[101] First correlation.

[102] i.e., beneficiary.

Šarat Simat,[104] d. of Hawa and
Sheikh ʿAziz, s. of
(omitting 5 names)
ʿAnat,[105] Sabur,
who copied from:

Zihrun, s. of
Adam Yuhana
(omitting 10 names)
Zihrun, Dihdaria,
from:
Bayan, s. of
Mhatam, s. of
(omitting 4 names)
ʿ*ṣṭa* Bania, Dihdaria, Sabur,
from:

Bihram, s. of
Adam Yuhana, s. of
(omitting 10 names)
Zihrun, Dihdaria, Sabur,
for his brother,[107]
from:

ʿ*ṣṭa* ʿDia = Bihram,[108] s. of
ʿ*ṣṭa* Baṣria = Bihram,
Disfulia,[109]
from:

Anhar, d. of Šarat Simat &
Dihdar Karam, s. of
(omitting 13 names)
Yahia, ʿAziz, Kupašia and
Durašia (=Durakia),

from my father
Bihram Sam, s. of
Yahia Zihrun, etc.
(as in Bihram Sam's
lineage, above), for:
Hida Mamania (Kašla),
d. of
Šabarah, s. of
Nasir, Manduia, Pasiq Qals,
from:

Ram Yuhana, s. of
Yahia Zihrun, s. of
(omitting 4 names)[106]
Sam. ʿkuma, Manduia,
for the pious:

ʿUstad Saʿud (=Ram), s. of
ʿUstad Bšarah, s. of
Našim, Kamisia, Riš Draz,
from:

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[103] Ditto.

[104] Given name: Zarip.

[105] Unusual male name; it is usually female, but evidently not here.

[106] In this lineage, there are connections to the lineage of Sh. Idan, the copyist of the 1886 California *Ginza* and the current *DC 22* lineage of Ram Yuhana is shortened in the text.

[107] i.e., the brother is the beneficiary.

[108] According to colophon 2, Bihram is the brother of the previous copyist by the same name.

[109] Perhaps dubious as an individual name; this is a family name.

Mamul Dihgan,
d. of
ʿṣṭa Bihram
ʿṣṭa Manṣur, Dihdaria, Sabur,
from 2 books, one of them from:

Yasmin Bana, d.
of a father of *ganzibra*s
Yahia Bihram
(omitting 6 names)
Yahia, Buhaiir,
and the other one from:

Yahia Yuhana, s. of
Sarwan Bayan
Sam
Sarwan Šitil, Šaʿpuria,
from:

Yahia,[111] s. of
Zihrun, s. of Ram, s. of
(omitting two names)
Šitil, Šabur, Hadiia,
from the ganzibra

Zakia Bayan, s. of
Yahia Bihram, s. of
Yahia Sam, s. of
Bihram Yuhana, Šapuria,
from his own book[112], from:

Yahia Šaiar, s. of
Adam Baktiar, s. of
Yahia Bayan, s. of
Adam Bulbul, Durakia,
from:

Sam Yuhana, s. of
Yahia Adam, s. of
(omitting 7 names)
Baktiar, ʿAsikir,
from:

Hida Hawa Simat, d. of
Adam, s. of
(omitting 5 names)
Yahia, Salim,
from:

Ram, s. of
(omitting 3 names)
Bihram Brhiia, Kuhailia,
from three books,[110]
the second one is by:

Zihrun, s. of

Bihram BrHiia, Kuhailia,
and a third book, by:

Yahia Ram, s. of
Bihram Zihrun, s. of
Ram, Kuhailia,
from:

Bihram, s. of
Adam Zakia, Kuhailia,
from:

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[110] The owner of the first one is unrecorded.

[111] Secular name: ʿUstad Paraš.

[112] Zakia Bayan's lineage is repeated.

Yahia Bayan[113] ʿṣṭad Laiit[114], Diqnana, from:	Yahia Sam, s. of Zihrun Hibil, s. of Bihdad,[115] ʿAziz, from:
Yahia Sam Zihrun Hibil Anuš Adam Bihdad, ʿAziz, from:	Yahia, s. of Laiit, from:
Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul Sam Bihram Mhatam, ʿAsakir, etc.	Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul etc.

Here, with the three scribes Yahia Bayan, Yahia Sam, and Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, around 1500, the two colophons start to flow into the identical scribal stream (see figure 3.2).

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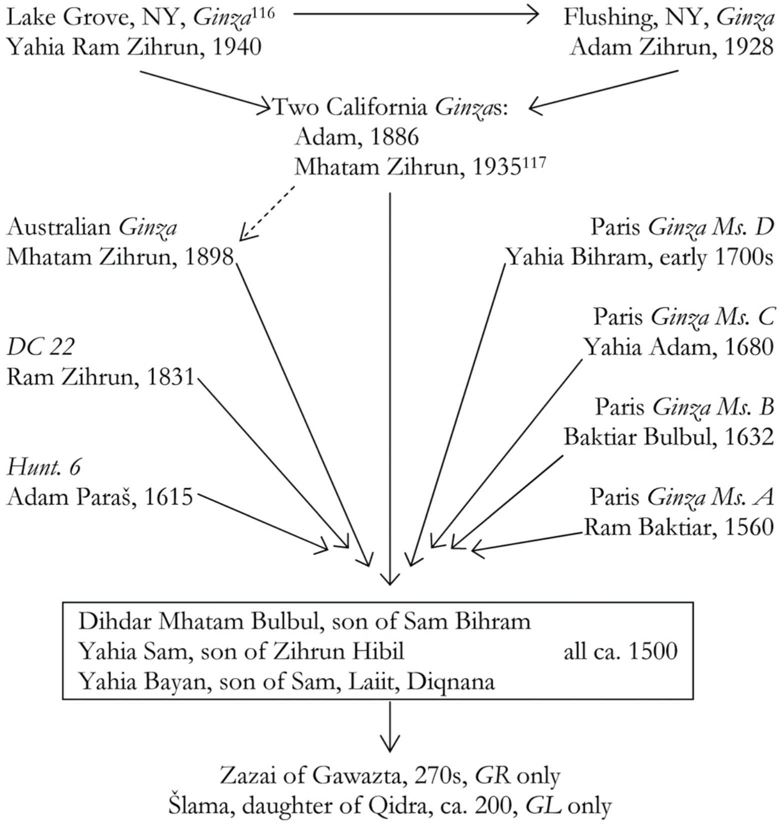
[113] Notice how in the two columns the sequence of the two scribes Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, and Yahia (Bayan), son of (Sam Bihram), Laiit, Diqnana, are now reversed. At this point, *DC 22*'s colophon 1 starts to intersect with that of Paris *Ms. A*, where the next link, Yahia Sam's, is omitted, and the colophon goes directly to Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul.

[114] i.e., Sam Bihram.

[115] Shortened list; Anuš should be inserted before (Adam) Bihdad.

Figure 3.2

The seven other *Ginzas* in relation to the Paris *Ginza* manuscripts


Lake Grove, NY, *Ginza*[116]
Yahia Ram Zihrun, 1940
Flushing, NY, *Ginza*
Adam Zihrun, 1928
Two California *Ginza*s:
Adam, 1886
Mhatam Zihrun, 1935[117]
Australian *Ginza*
Mhatam Zihrun, 1898
Paris *Ginza Ms. D*
Yahia Bihram, early 1700s
DC 22
Ram Zihrun, 1831
Paris *Ginza Ms. C*
Yahia Adam, 1680
Paris *Ginza Ms. B*
Baktiar Bulbul, 1632
Hunt. 6
Adam Paraš, 1615
Paris *Ginza Ms. A*
Ram Baktiar, 1560
Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam Bihram
Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil
Yahia Bayan, son of Sam, Laiit, Diqnana
all ca. 1500
Zazai of Gawazta, 270s, *GR* only
Šlama, daughter of Qidra, ca. 200, *GL* only

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[116] This is a photocopy, not an original text.

[117] The copyist of the 1935 California *Ginza* also copied the 1898 Australian one.

4 MANDAIC ADVENTURES IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY

INTRODUCTION

Venturing into the relatively new British Library by St Pancras Station in London to find Mandaic texts was not so simple at first. In early February 2003, the person I approached at the desk in the Oriental and India Office Collections Reading Room did not know how to spell the word "Mandaic." Moreover, the word did not exist in the computer database, and it took a while before someone thought to pull out *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum.*[1] Appendix B of said catalogue, Part iii, page 1211, turned out to carry a comforting, but odd, headline: "The Mandaitic Mss. in the British Museum." "Mandaitic" is not a word used in current scholarship, and no term remotely like it can be found in the catalogue's index. Only by recognizing names of Mandaean scribes as I flipped through names in the index did I secure some footing in reality.

We may, perhaps, blame the Swedish scholar Matthias Norberg, who is 1815–16 published the first Latin *Ginza* translation.[2] He considered Mandaic to be a depraved and ruined Syriac and therefore he changed into Syriac the text he had on his hands, the *Ginza* (also called *The Book of Adam*). Norberg's volume is a curiosity, but useless for research; on this, all scholars agree. As a result of his mislabeling, we struggle with Mandaic texts sometimes being catalogued under "Syriac" in European manuscript collections even today. It often takes some detective work to ascertain which texts are indeed Mandaic, and which are, in fact, Syriac.

Heinrich Petermann, publishing the next *Ginza*,[3] made a transcription of the Mandaic text, using the four *Ginza* manuscripts in the Bibliothèque

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[1] Published by W. Wright, Ll. D., in 1872.

[2] Matthias Norberg, *Codex Nasaraeus liber Adami appellatus.*

[3] Petermann, *Sidra rabba.*

Nationale in Paris.[4] Norberg had employed only one of these texts, no. 2 (now called *Ms. B*), while Petermann had favored *Ms. A* but gave the variants in the second volume of his work. Subsequently, scholars such as Julius Euting, Theodor Nöldeke, and Wilhelm Brandt paved the way for Mark Lidzbarski and others.

Nöldeke reveals that he had held Paris *Ginza Ms. B* in his own hands for some weeks.[5] He mentions the Wright catalogue regarding the "Londoner Codices zum Königsbuch."[6] This title, *The Book of Kings*, is an alternative name for *The Book of John* (*JB*), which is not the *Ginza*, for *JB*'s alternative name is *The Book of Adam*, as we have seen. Nöldeke clearly had in mind the *Ginza*, saying that the Paris *Mss. C* and *D*, due to their inferior quality, belong together with the Oxford *Ginza* (i.e., *Hunt. 6*), which he had also seen. He did not rate the London *Ginza*s highly, and he neglected precision with respect to call numbers or even titles.

Mark Lidzbarski, in his lists of consulted Mandaean texts, adduced two items he called "Londoner Rolle A und B" under the heading "Benutzte Handschriften" in his editions and translations of the *Ginza*, *Mand. Lit.*, and *JB*.[7] Such vague call numbers as "London rolls A and B" do not impress modern librarians or computers. At my visit in the British Library, I was not looking for the rolls, particularly, but for other treasures. How to find the British Library *Ginza*s? That was the main question. And did the Library have anything else Mandaic besides "rolls A and B"?

After the lucky discovery of Wright's catalogue's Appendix B, it became clear that the Library had three *Ginza*s, none of which seems to have attracted attention among scholars, though Drower saw them. In the introduction to his 1925 *Ginza* translation, Lidzbarski says that he was unable to consult the original English *Ginza*s, due to World War I and its aftermath.[8] But he had photographs of them. Unlike Nöldeke, Lidzbarski did not think that the variations between the English and the Paris *Ginza*s were particularly significant.

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[4] Treated in chap. 2.

[5] Nöldeke, *Mandäische Grammatik*, xxiii.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, xviii. Here he is wrong, mixing up the dates, for Roll A, which contains the Mandaean marriage liturgy, is from 1880, not 1872, while Roll B, an apotropaic text, dates to 1852, not 1872. The correct call numbers are OR 6592 for Roll A, and OR 6593 for Roll B.

[8] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, xv.

In addition to its *Ginza*s, the British Library possesses a sort of scrapbook containing glued-in Mandaic text fragments, some pages being very mutilated and torn. Wright's catalogue lists thirteen "Mandaitic" items, ten of which are in the scrapbook. Lidzbarski's rolls A and B are too recent to be included in the 1872 catalogue. For my purposes, the two rolls—and whatever else Mandaic might lurk under the category "Syriac"—would have to wait for another time. I focused on the *Ginza*s and the scrapbook.

All four codices—the three *Ginza*s and the "scrapbook" with its ten fragments—are bound in dark red leather. In terms of my particular research interest, I wanted to learn who had transcribed the *Ginza*s, when they were made, and whether there were any postscripts in them. At this stage, I was not going to do a full-scale comparison of the *tarik*s with the eleven other *Ginza*s I had already worked on. I assumed that the fragmented contents of the scrapbook (23.602A) would have little to offer.

THE FIRST *GINZA*

Item no. 1 in the *Catalogue* has the call number Add. 23,600. This *Ginza* was bought from Mrs. Taylor in April 1860. She is, obviously, the widow of Colonel J. E. Taylor, the British Vice-Consul at Baghdad.[9] Drower's note about Taylor in *MHZ* says, "About 1854 he excavated at ʿUr and discovered the site of Eridu."[10] In his postscript to *MHZ*, the Mandaean priest and cholera survivor Yahia Bihram[11] describes how his own father, the priest Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, instructed Taylor, the "Consul-Beg," in the reading of the *Ginza*. But Adam Yuhana refrained from discussing the book's esoteric meanings with the official.[12] Consul Taylor and the Mandaean priest lived in adjacent houses in Basra. According to my calculations, these discussions must have taken place in the early part of the nineteenth century, when Yahia Bihram was relatively young. He says that he was fourteen years old when the consul sent for his father.

This *Ginza,* consisting of 315 folios, is the oldest one in the British Library. Completed in 1735–36, it stems from another scribe named Yahia Bihram: Yahia Bihram, son of Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans.

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[9] Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq 1900 to 1950*, 3, mentions Taylor among the English pioneers of Iraqi archaeology.

[10] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 92 n. 5.

[11] This is Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Kamisia and Ris Draz clans (ibid., 92).

[12] See chaps. 7 and 13 below.

This Yahia Bihram is none other than the scribe of *Ginza Ms. D* in Paris, which, as noted in chapter 2, lacks a firm copying date. The colophon there only says that the work was completed during the 1700s. Therefore, it is fortunate to now have the date for the British Library *Ginza*, which shows this priest to be active in the 1730s. So far, he is not otherwise attested as scribe in texts other than *JB*'s *Ms. D* and the current *Ginza*.

I have found only five colophons in the whole *Ginza*, which cannot be correct. Or, perhaps there is an alternative *Ginza* tradition, with only five colophons instead of seven? I doubt it. The two lacking colophons may have been written on separate pages and left out; the smaller script would indicate that such pages were not part of the main text and someone might have cut them out. Looking at the first *GR* colophon, after *GR* 13, I found yet another variant of the last scribe there: Ram Silan (instead of Ram Šilai), without indication of his initiator, Daimir. And at the end of the last *GR* colophon, after *GR* 18, the text gives an incorrect, compressed sequence of names, "Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, son ofAnuš, son of Bihram Šitil, son of Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan." The correct ending of this colophon is simply the name of the last copyist, Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. The other names do not belong in this context.

No city appears in the postscript. A leaf is missing at the start of *GL*. The name of the last copyist of *GL* is corrupt and obscures the woman scribe (a feature we have observed in other *Ginza*s):"the father of Šlama, son(!) of Qadmaia."

THE SECOND *GINZA*

The British Library's second *Ginza* (Add. 23,599) was also purchased from Taylor's widow in April 1860. The codex's pages are stained. Consul Taylor's interlocutor in Basra—our old acquaintance Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, of the Kamisia and Riš Draz families—is the copyist. The text carries no date. In the formula at the beginning, forgiveness of sins is asked for the beneficiary, Yasmin, daughter of Šimat. On the bottom of page 144 there starts another formula with Yasmin's name and those of her father, mother, husband, children (four sons), and brother. Yasmin's secular name is revealed to be Našma.

The *Ginza*'s third copyist is Yahia Bihram, son of Adam, of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans. As we have just seen, he copied the previous codex, the first British Library *Ginza*, in 1735–36. This Yahia Bihram copied from a woman unattested in my colophon research so far: Simat, daughter of Adam Yuhana. She, clearly a priest, belongs to the Zakia and Buhaiir families, and her *Ginza* copy in turn depended on that of the priest Yasmin

Bana, a familiar woman priest and copyist. These women belong to a time period, about 1700–1800, when the Mandaeans have several women priests.[13] Yasmin Bana copied from the famous Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil, whose name (along with that of his son-in-law Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul) marks the confluence of so many *Ginza* colophons.

Like the *Ginza* Add. 23,600, this one has a corrupt form of Ram Šilai's name in the first *GR* colophon; here he is called "Ram Šitlai," but at least his father's/initiator's name is correct. There seems to be no colophon at the end of *GR*. But colophons 2, 3, 4, and 5 are, it seems, in the right spots. Two leaves are missing after folio 200, which might explain the lack of a colophon 6.

The *GL* colophon is broken; there are missing pages. It ends with folio 77v., "This is the Book of Souls that I copied," but the scribe's name is Bihram Sam, son of Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans. This Bihram Sam is the *DM'L* copyist, from 1789! Why does he suddenly appear? He may have taken over the task of copying *GL* in place of Adam Yuhana, but we do not know why. The beneficiary is the same, Yasmin, daughter of Simat, so it is not an instance of copying *GR* and *GL* for two different persons, a situation we have seen in other cases. As noted, we have no date for this *Ginza*, but the presence of Bihram Sam shows him as a contemporary of Adam Yuhana, and we have plenty of dates for Adam Yuhana's other copyist activities.

Bihram Sam's initiator, Yahia Yuhana, is the uncle of the cholera survivor Yahia Bihram. Yahia Yuhana is lauded as possessing much priestly wisdom, removing obstacles in the way of the Mandaeans, and writing the *Ginza* at night as much as his eyes could tolerate. The beneficiary, Yasmin, is spoken of in the usual manner, as having given plentiful offerings for the copying task, but in this instance the offering is specified as enabling a priest initiation. Identified as a daughter of Šamil, son of Tamir Kan, Yasmin is not a priest, and the names of her father and grandfather are secular and seem suspiciously Muslim. But the family name *is* Mandaean: Kupašia.

Bihram Sam copied the *Ginza* from the same book as was used by Adam Yuhana (whom he replaced as copyist after *GR*), a codex belonging to the woman Simat. At this point, Simat's other name is revealed: Yasmin (confusingly, the same name as that of the beneficiary). The predecessor of Simat's book was not the same as in Adam Yuhana's case, but a *Ginza* belonging to the well-known priest Mhatam, son of Yahia Bayan, of the sons of Dihdaria. Mhatam is a copyist of many Mandaean manucripts, such as *ATŠ*, *HG*, *MHZ*, *DiwAb*, and Ms. Asiat. Misc. C13.[14] But this is the first time I have seen him as a *Ginza* scribe. After Mhatam, the colophon only mentions his predecessor: Mamul. Mamul must be identical to Mamul Dihgan, a well-known woman copyist of *Ginza* and of *JB*. With her, the list ends abruptly, obviously cut off.

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[13] See chap. 8.

THE THIRD *GINZA*

The third British Library *Ginza* codex, Add. 23,601, is also by Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, and it has a date: 1824. Like the others, it came to the British Library through Taylor's widow in April 1860, but this codex was written for the salvific benefit of the British Consul himself: "Mistar Tila." His given name is rendered as Baliuz Beg, which *may* be a way of saying "Bailiff Sir." In the slot for the *maṣbuta* name, the Consul's mother's name is left empty.

The *Ginza* is concluded in Basra, in the house of Mhamad, son of Gaʿid, in the district of Ṣbaka.[15] The governor of Babil is Daud Paša, Adam Yuhana rightly says (r. 1816–1831), and the governor of Basra is ʿZir Aga.

A leaf, of a slightly smaller size than the rest of the volume, is prefixed to the *Ginza*'s second half, and it seems to belong to a *Qulasta*, the liturgical collection containing the baptismal and *masiqta* prayers. The leaf offers a series of names of persons and, on the verso, names of the planets and zodiac spirits. Colonel Taylor has supplied interlinear translations here. The leaf concludes with a note dated 1593–94, and according to Wright's *Catalogue*, col. 1214b, "the leaf is in reality not older than the rest of the volume." That may be so, but it seems clear that Adam Yuhana copied this leaf from a sixteenth-century *Qulasta*; and as such, the leaf contains valuable information from a different age.

At this point, perusing the leaf, a reader familiar with the Mandaean prayer *CP* 170, called *Abahatan*, will immediately experience a sense of recognition. Reciting *CP* 170, Mandaean priests ask forgiveness of sins for a long roster of figures, Lightworldly and earthly.[16] *CP* 170 specifies different categories of Mandaeans: ethnarchs, *ganzibra*s, *tarmida*s, and laypeople. Compared to *CP* 170, the leaf in Add. 23,601 includes only the *ganzibra* and the ethnarch rubrics but no *tarmida* category. In comparison to *CP* 170, the twenty-two names in the *ganzibra* list start in reverse order, with the ancient Persian Arsacid ruler Ardban Malka, the legendary liberator of the Mandaeans. Here, as elsewhere, he enjoys honorary *ganzibra* status, and like his fellows, he is listed with his *maṣbuta* name. Of the names in the *ganzibra* list, only one is indicated with a patronym, and there are a few discrepancies with the *CP* prayer. Two men, Hurmuzdukt,[17] son of Hawa Zadia, and Anuš, son of Buran, are present in the leaf from 1593, but they do not occur in *CP* 170. Otherwise, the lists show remarkable similarity, and the two female *ganzibra*s in *CP* 170, Hawa and Anhar Kumraita, are present.

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[14] *Diwan Razia d̲-Abahata* (The Scroll [of] the Secrets of the Parents), unpublished. The scroll is glued onto Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 12, which is the impressively illustrated *Diwan d̲-Qadaha Rba Šuma d̲-Mara d̲-Rabuta u-dmut Kušṭa* (The Scroll of the Great Prayer, the Name of the Lord of Greatness, and the Image of Truth), also unpublished. More is said about the latter text in the next chapter.

[15] The name indicates soil that is salty. It is near Basra.

In the *riš amia* (i.e., ethnarch) list, the figures are virtually the same as in *CP*. Of the nine ethnarch names, Haiuna, daughter of Tiwia, occurs in both compilations.

After the enumeration of planet and zodiac spirits comes an unusual postscript. The beginning of it is common enough—the anonymous scribe starts by saying that he concluded his *Qulasta* "in the place of the rebellious ones" (i.e., Muslims), in the year 1002 according to the computation of the Arabs (1593/94 CE) (the usual curse follows), "in the Arab places." But then he waxes poetic and remarkably otherwordly, saying that he lives in "the town that is cut to pieces (*duqaq*) and in the land that vanished (*daka*)."[18] In contrast to common formulaic usage, the scribe does *not* proceed to name earthly rulers, but says, "in the governorship of the lofty, good king and his compassionate heart. And they [i.e., the Mandaeans] saw nothing (of it) that was not beautiful."

I take this to be an inventive, evasive tactic, a "Gnostic" way of speaking about nearly unbearable earthly conditions. Manda ḏ-Hiia preserves a person of rank, the scribe goes on to say, but what that might mean is not entirely clear. Further, we learn that there is a single *tarmida* in the town, but the town's name is not specified. This *tarmida* consolidated the Mandaeans, instructed them, and advanced their knowledge. Literate people (*yalufa*s) and religious officiants enabled the Mandaeans to worship the great, lofty king.

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[16] See chap. 10 on *CP* 170. There I offer correlations with similar lists in other Mandaean documents.

[17] His name is problematic, because it means "Daughter of Hormuz" in Persian. The fact that the man has what appears to be a feminine name is all too common in the incantation bowls, where we have names like Diunharduk son of Abanduk (Segal 096M) and Diuanhaqdukt son of Abanduk (Segal 091M).

[18] Puns may be at work here; the translation is somewhat uncertain.

Changing his tone, the sixteenth-century scribe continues, “Now, there is much wickedness of the world against us, and it overwhelms us.” Knowledge is forgotten, it departs from the community, and Mandaeans even “prostrate themselves before the root of Mšiha.” Such confessions of conversion to Christianity are uncommon in Mandaean postscripts, though they do occasionally appear.[19] Making use of the similarity between the verb roots *ZGA* (“forget”) and *ZGR* (“cut off”), the scribe stresses that forgetting the religion and being cut off from it amount to the same thing. “Cut off from the strength of the sons of Basra,” the Mandaeans also find themselves removed from the power of Mubarak, the governor of Huwaiza. This tells us that the folio probably stems from Khuzistan, and that the scribe’s community is caught in limbo, exposed to dangers, far from protection by potentially non-hostile authorities in Basra and Huwaiza.

“And we weep every day in much persecution and anxiety and harassment against us,” the postscript continues. But then, “there came to us the wisdom of the letter (*ʿingirta*)[20] of King Šitil,[21] and (it) sustained us and released us from the mouth of ʿUr[22] and established the age of Yawar Ziwa.” It is not clear whether this amounts to a “message from the Lightworld,” or whether a new Mandaean leader has arisen. With renewed courage, the Mandaeans turn to their faith again. “We were not distressed, and the precious light that is not vanquished by darkness.” The text ends with the usual formula, “in the strength of Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš ʿUtra—praised be their names in the elevated place, in the house of the perfected ones. Life is victorious!”

THE SCRAPBOOK

On the spine of the British Library’s “scrapbook” is printed *Kholasta sive liturgica Sabiorum Libri Joannis Fragmenta Mendaice*. Of a quite different format from the *Ginza*s, the book has 101 pages in all, containing fragments obviously acquired by Taylor. The ten items (numbered IV to XIII) in the piecemeal collection are indeed a motley group. Each of the ten has its own call number. In the first, IV, we find eighteen leaves, one of which reveals that it is part of a *Ginza* from 1764/65, transcribed in Šuštar. The end of the *GL* colophon has "the father of Šlama, son of Qidma," yet another variant! Fragment V consists of forty-three leaves of a *Qulasta*, written in Šuštar (in the area Šarhan)[23] in 1807, by our old friend Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, of the Kamisia and Riš Draz clans. There is a washed-out part on page 43, where the postscript begins. The Qajar Shah is Fatil ʿAlia Shah,[24] and Adam Yuhana says that he copied the text in his own house. So, at this point, he does not reside in Basra, the city where he instructs Colonel Taylor in the *Ginza*. In this *Qulasta* fragment, Colonel Taylor has interlineated names of the letters of the Mandaic alphabet.

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[19] We saw an instance in *Hunt. 6* (see chapter 3 above).

[20] The prototypical Gnostic message, the letter from the Lightworld.

[21] A Mandaean Lightbeing and messenger.

[22] The underworld monster dragon.

Seventy-five leaves of the *Qulasta* make up text VI, according to Wright's *Catalogue*, and the leaves belong to six different manuscripts. The first one is written in 1775 in Šuštar, and the scribe is Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, of the Dihdaria and Sabur families. The text is written for the benefit of Sam Bihram, son of Simat (perhaps identical to the scribe himself). The rest of the items in VI range from one to seventeen leaves of text, and for most of them, we have information about the text's owners. They seem to belong to the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Item VII consists of fragments of two *Qulasta* manuscripts.

Twenty-three leaves of a seventeenth-century *Book of John*[25] make up item VIII. Here are drawings of gazelles and plants. The text is part of the speeches of John the Baptist.[26] The next item has three leaves, and it, too, consists of *JB* parts, seemingly from the same manuscript. Item X has a single leaf, but in two handwritings. It seems to be part of a scroll. And the next one, XI, must have been part of a charm. It belonged to Yahia, son of Hawa Simat.

Next to last, XII is a mere fragment of a roll, a tiny piece of an intriguing drawing, with yellowish color added to the usual black and white. It seems to be part of a ritual scroll, but hardly an "amulet," as the Catalogue says. Names of central Mandaean ritual implements appear in the broken text. It would be good if someone could try to determine where this fragment belongs.

Item XIII consists of fragments of a paper roll, presumably an amulet written for Yahia Bihram, son of Yasmin.

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[23] Unknown to me.

[24] R. 1797–1834.

[25] This would be older than any *JB* manuscript that I know.

[26] These sermons occupy Lidzbarski's *Johannesbuch*, 70–123. This tractate, called "Yahia Yuhana," is the largest one in the entire codex.

All of these scrapbook pieces probably belonged to the same person, and I suspect that all of them derived from Colonel Taylor's friendship with Adam Yuhana.

Why did the Colonel even bother with the fragments when he had three almost complete *Ginza*s? Or did he only acquire the *Ginza*s later, after Adam Yuhana had let him purchase the fragments? How many *Ginza*s did Adam Yuhana own? Are we witnessing a situation where a Mandaean priest has such a large library that he can "afford," in the religious sense, to sell parts of his heritage? Or: to what extent are such transactions a function of financial straits? Of genuine friendship and generosity? How did Adam Yuhana's family feel about these texts leaving the family library? The questions could easily multiply. We shall meet Adam Yuhana again, especially in the chapter about his son Yahia Bihram.

◆

Many other *Ginza*s exist, of course, and I know of a few of them, for Mandaeans in exile in various countries have their holy texts. In Niskayuna, New York, there is a photocopy of one that I have not studied, but I have glanced at the colophons. Written in the late 1990s, it mentions the Iranian authorities Khomeini and Khatami. The scribe is the *ganzibra* of Ahwaz, Iran: Sh. Jabbar (= Šabur), son of Tawoos (= Mhatam Yuhana, son of Yahia). He belongs to the Choheili (their spelling of Kuhailia) family. Sh. Jabbar became a *tarmida* in 1948, in Qalʿat Saleh, Iraq, initiated by Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Sam, of the Manduias.

Sh. Jabbar copied the *Ginza* from Zihrun, son of Mudalal, and Zihrun was the father of Sh. Negm, whom we shall meet in the next chapter. The copyist lineage in the first colophon does not contain Zihrun's father, Ram Zihrun (of the 1831 cholera epidemic fame), but goes directly from Sh. Jabbar to Zihrun's grandfather, Sam Bihram. From there on, I have not studied the rosters of scribes, but on the basis of research so far, there is little reason to suspect that they differ much from the patterns in other *Ginza*s, especially from about 1500 and earlier.

Sh. Jabbar says that he copied the book in Naṣiriyah, on the Karun River. This is Ahwaz, for Ahwaz is sometimes called by the name Naṣiriyah, like its namesake on the lower Euphrates in Iraq. Naṣiriyah in Iraq no longer marks a Mandaean center, as it did in the past, but Ahwaz is the chief Mandaean city of Iran.

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At this point, I leave the focus on the *Ginza* and move to a section on priests and scholars. Many already familiar topics and names reappear as I next turn to Lady Drower and Sh. Negm.

PART 2: PRIESTS AND SCHOLARS

5 LADY DROWER AND SHEIKH NEGM

The primary fieldworker in Mandaean studies remains Lady E. S. Drower (1879–1972).[1] In the years between the two World Wars, Drower's husband, Sir E. Drower, was an adviser to the government in Baghdad during the British Mandate. It was here that Lady Drower encountered the Mandaeans for the first time, although she was already famous for her novels and travel accounts, many of them set in the Near East. Several of these were published under Drower's maiden name, E. S. Stevens.

Drower's life merits a biography, and there is indeed a plan for one.[2] She was active in scholarly work until she reached her 80s, and I was lucky enough to meet her in 1971. In 1988, Drower's daughter gave me several folders of Drower's scholarly manuscripts, papers, and correspondence for safekeeping. A particular set of papers in those archives make the major part of this chapter possible: the letters to Drower from her friend, the Mandaean priest Sh. Negm. He helped her procure most of the Mandaean manuscripts constituting the Drower Collection (DC) in the Bodleian Library.

Aside from these letters, I am also indebted to present-day Mandaeans for information aiding me in the task of more fully portraying Sh. Negm himself, his family relationships, and his lineage.[3] This chapter, then, falls into two parts: first, a description of the relationship between Drower and Sh. Negm, largely based on his letters to her (I have only one from her to him); second, information relating to Sh. Negm, based on evidence from present-day Mandaeans, paired with my own research on Mandaean colophons and priest lineages. Pieces of a larger puzzle will begin to fall into place here: the family and scribal links among Mandaean priests in recent times, and these priests' contemporaries and predecessors.

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[1] An earlier, shorter version of this chapter was published under the title "A Mandaean Correspondence."

[2] Until then, see Hackforth-Jones, "The Life of Lady E. S. Drower," by her daughter Margaret. See also my foreword to the 2002 reprint of Drower's *MII*.

[3] My special thanks are due here to Mr. Sinan Abdullah, Mr. Nasser Sobbi, Sh. Haithem of Australia, and Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Negm.

LADY DROWER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SHEIKH NEGM

> The flame of a genuine piety glows in the eyes of the dark and temperamental Shaikh Nejm when he expounds Mandaean teaching to his poor little flock at Liṭlaṭa. It is said that of the wild-looking, poverty-stricken marsh Mandaeans who come to him for baptism, he often expects no offering but thanks.[4]

With these words, Drower characterizes Sh. Negm when she first knew him as a *tarmida* in Liṭlaṭa (a village at Qalʿat Saleh). He was born in Huwaiza in 1892, lived in Khorramshahr in his early youth, and moved to Qalʿat Saleh in 1914.

Among the DC documents is *DC 2*, a small, unpublished book (155 pages) of prayers. Sh. Negm copied the book in 1933 for the benefit of Drower. Of DC 2, Drower observes, "I am treated as a Mandaean throughout." As her *maṣbuta* name, Drower obtains Klila pt Šušian ("Wreath, daughter of Susan"). This is an excellent choice, because Lady Drower's second given name is Stefana ("wreath," in Greek). Given the ritual and mythological significance of the myrtle wreath, *klila*, in Mandaeism, what could be a more felicitous omen to a Mandaean consciousness? In the formula, Sh. Negm states that Drower "is not from our root," but she is lauded as a pious person who loves the Life (*rahmta hiia*).

In another transaction, with a priest of the Manduia clan,[5] Drower acquired *DC 26*, which contains two *qmaha*s (exorcisms). These texts are transcribed in the name of Drower's daughter, Margaret ("Peggy"), who is "Marganita,[6] daughter of Klila."

Drower and Sh. Negm must have known one another already in 1933, the copying date of *DC 2*. As noted, I have only one letter of Drower's to Sh. Negm, while there are about fourteen of his, in English, to her. Several undated ones are in Mandaic[7] script and one is in Arabic. Sh. Negm's letters in English, written by at least seven different scribes (to judge by the handwriting), stem from the period 1936–50, most of them from a brief and busy period in 1939. Even when he hires a scribe, Sh. Negm always includes his own Mandaic signature and, in almost all cases, blessings and formulaic greetings. Most of his letters were sent to Drower while she resided in Baghdad. A few went to England when Drower was back home on visits.

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[4] *MII*, 54.

[5] Sh. Farraj, son of Sh. Sam.

[6] "Pearl."

[7] These letters are written by a priest named Sh. Kumait, on behalf of Sh. Negm. They are actually in Iraqi Arabic.

As cultural documents, the letters give eloquent testimony to a period now vanished and to the relationship between Drower and Sh. Negm, and they offer a glimpse of how the priest proceeded in his task of procuring Mandaean manuscripts. In a letter of Drower's, of 18 May 1949, to Prof. E. A. Speiser at the University of Pennsylvania (in the Drower papers given to me in 1988), she calls Sh. Negm "my chief friend amongst the Mandaean priests." Sh. Negm in fact acted as a broker between Drower and other Mandaeans, chiefly one Khuzistani Mandaean priest who, in his turn, approached the owners of Mandaean texts in Persia. This priest, Yahia, was Sh. Negm's brother, though Sh. Negm never says so in his correspondence with Drower. Yahia travelled a great deal among the towns Liṭlaṭa, Basra, Huwaiza, and Ahwaz. He died and was buried in Qalʿat Saleh in 1954.[8]

Sh. Negm's earliest dated letter in English is from 2 February 1936. He has it written not in his hometown Liṭlaṭa but in Basra, where he has arrived that very day. His main message is that a present, the *Ginza*, has just arrived from his home and he will send it to Drower in the next mail. This is undoubtedly the future *DC 22*, which Drower bought from him that year. It is a large codex, beautifully written, copied in 1831.[9] Sh. Negm sends his greetings to Drower's husband, apologizes for any mistakes the letter might contain, and calls himself "your faith full servent." He signs his name in Mandaic and adds a greeting, which includes a blessing and the epithet "sister in *kušṭa*" (i.e., "truth") for Drower.

One of the three undated letters in Mandaic script must have been written just after the one of 2 February 1936. These letters are written by Sh. Kumait, who evidently acted on Sh. Negm's behalf.[10] First, Sh. Kumait thanks Drower for a letter she has written to Sh. Negm, and then he lists a number of Mandaean texts that he has just delivered to "Mr. Drower, the Inspector of Justice." Among others, he mentions a *Ginza*, in all likelihood the future *DC 22* in the Bodleian. By Arabic computation, the priest says, the *Ginza* is a hundred years old, which would roughly fit the date (1831) of *DC 22*. Complaining that he has no money to cover his expenses, the priest asks Drower for help.

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[8] During World War II, it was easy to cross the border between Iraq and Iran.

[9] This *Ginza* is treated in chap. 3 below.

[10] Sh. Kumait was a *tarmida* of the Manduia family who came from Iraq to Khorramshahr during World War II and returned to Iraq after the war.

Another letter, in Mandaic, from Sh. Kumait (with Drower's interlinear translations), says that he has brought her not only the *Ginza*, but several other texts: a *Qulasta*, a *zrazta*, a *Taṣṭir ṣbaqa*,[11] and a collection of *ʿniana*s ("response prayers"). "Dear Klila, I am not a liar. You say, 'I will give you 100 rupees.' And who am I? A poor man." In part, the contents reflect those of Sh. Kumait's previous letter.[12]

The third Mandaic letter by Sh. Kumait gives a list of twenty-four titles of Mandaic documents. Some of them are unknown to me.

Now I return to Sh. Negm. As noted, scribes wrote all of his letters, in English. I suspect that Sh. Negm switched to the use of English-writing scribes because Drower may have had trouble understanding his (and Sh. Kumait's) colloquial Mandaic. The next letter from Sh. Negm (in a different handwriting than the one of 2 Feb. 1936) is dated 13 December 1938. Sh. Negm is again in Basrah, having "met much difficulty by that rain and I also caught a cold." A fever has delayed his reply to Drower, he explains. Waiting to get a passport in order to cross the border to Persia, he is copying out the *Qmaha Pašar Mihla* ("Phylactery for the Exorcism of Salt"), the original of which Drower will buy from him in 1939.[13] He will send Drower the *qmaha* when he is finished with his copying task, either in Persia or when he has returned home. Also, he will send the "*Diwan* of Interpretations," which is probably *DMʿL*.[14] Signing himself her "brother in *kušṭa*," Sh. Negm asks the "Life," the highest Mandaean Lightworld entity, to protect Drower.

On 2 January 1939, Sh. Negm responds to a letter Drower has sent him,[15] asking about his plans to travel to Persia. Sh. Negm says he has written two letters to Sheikh Abdullah (Khaffagi) of Ahwaz,[16] in order to obtain his help in getting permission to enter the country. Still in Basra, and still working on the *Qmaha* mentioned in the previous letter, Sh. Negm is waiting for word from the Persian Consulate. He says he will give the old copy of the *qmaha* to Drower and keep the new one for himself. This is a repeated pattern in Drower's and Sh. Negm's agreement: he will copy the old text that he has bought for her, thus expanding his own collection of Mandaean texts, while Drower waits until he is finished with his copying, and then she will receive the older document.

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[11] This garbled title means probably refers to the baptismal liturgy.

[12] Drower *did* buy a couple of texts directly from Sh. Kumait, *DC 13* and *DC 14*, both of which are incomplete parts of *The Zrazta of Hibil Ziwa*, but none of these are mentioned here.

[13] This *qmaha* will become *DC 40* in the Bodleian. It was written by Sh. Negm's uncle, Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun.

[14] The already mentioned *DMʿL* (*DC 34*). It is less likely that the text is *MHZ* (*DC 35*). Drower purchased both in April 1939.

[15] This letter is dated 30 December 1939, which must be a mistake for 1938; it is Western New Year's time.

The old *qmaha* stemmed from his grandfather, says Sh. Negm. But it was actually done by his uncle, Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun, who copied the roll in 1831, the year of the devastating cholera. Sh. Negm expresses gratitude to Drower for having sent him pen and paper, for paper appears to be scarce, expensive, perhaps rationed. He ends with profuse apologies for having been unable to send Drower and her husband, "the Mostashar," a New Year's card.

Much later that year, on 8 November 1939, Sh. Negm writes to Drower, who has inquired about Mandaean manuscripts. Happily, Sh. Negm conveys good news: he has the opportunity to purchase three books from a Persian Mandaean. Will Drower buy these for sixteen dinars?[17] That is the question. Correspondence has taken place between Sh. Negm and the Persian, Yahia, who has now brought the books to Basra for Sh. Negm's inspection. In his letter to Drower, Sh. Negm has obviously asked his scribe to leave a section of the sheet blank, so that he can insert the Mandaic titles of the texts: *Alma Rišaia Rba* ("The Great First World"), *Zraẓta ḏ-Hibil Ziwa* ("The Talisman of Hibil Ziwa"), and *Šarh ḏ-Ṭabahata* ("The Scroll of the Ancestors").[18]

Sh. Negm praises the condition of the texts, written on clean paper, "no spotted." He adds, "I cannot obtain better in all my long life." Further, he states that they are written "by an ancient people one is written by my father's grandfather" (i.e., Sh. Negm's own great-grandfather). The two others are older, he says. This is correct, for the youngest text is *Alma Rišaia Rba* (*ARR*), *DC 41*. It was copied in 1809, produced by Consul Taylor's interlocutor, Adam Yuhana, son of Sam Bihram.[19] This priest (whom we have seen so often and will meet again) was Sh. Negm's maternal great-grandfather ("my father's grandfather" is the Mandaic expression). For Adam Yuhana was the father of the priest Bibia Mudalal and of Yahia Bihram (both survived the cholera epidemic), and the father-in-law of Ram Zihrun. Bibia Mudalal was Sh. Negm's grandmother.

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[16] Aside from their own professional connection, these two priests are cousins.

[17] A considerable sum for those times; you could buy a very good house for such money.

[18] These will become *DC 41*, *44*, and *42*, respectively. Drower published the first text in *A Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, but the two others, so far, are not published.

Offering to be the go-between in this potential business agreement, Sh. Negm ends by expressing the hope that God will give peace: Drower has mentioned the war in Europe in her letter to him. November 1939 turns out to be a trying time for Sh. Negm. On 12 November he employs a different scribe, thanking Drower for her letter, which he has shown to the Persian book-owner. Sh. Negm has managed to reduce the price of the three texts to eleven dinars, and he needs to know whether this is low enough. "The seller is going away after 10 or 12 days, if you are in need of these books please let me know as soon as possible before he leaves."

Five days later a letter of Sh. Negm acknowledges the receipt of one of Drower's. (He has also written one to her on 16 Nov., a letter I do not have). A hectic correspondence is evidently going on between the two. Posting a parcel along with his letter, Sh. Negm is still waiting for Drower's money. The Persian, who remains as a guest with Sh. Negm, will not leave until he is paid. But he is in a hurry, for a festival starts on the 22nd, and he must be home for it. "Kindly remit the money by wire," pleads Sh. Negm, who is even willing to bear the expense for the telegram himself.

Next, it turns out that Sh. Negm has had to pay the Persian out of his own pocket. "I will say this is the last time to put myself in such [a predicament],"[20] he writes, and refers to a letter he wrote Drower the previous day, 20 November. Then he receives a telegram from her and responds, on 23 November, that he does not quite understand its contents. Evidently, Drower suspects that the "*Diwan*" (the *zrazta*, as Sh. Negm dubs it) may not be worth the money, for the manuscript's beginning is missing. However, "I completed it," explains Sh. Negm,[21] assuring her that the work is worth its price. He has sent Drower a telegram, and now magnanimously states that she should consider her debt only ten dinars, for, "I do not want to spoil my name among my customers."

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[19] For Consul Taylor, see chap. 4 above and chap. 7 below.

[20] My addition, in brackets.

[21] Indeed, regarding the *zrazta*, Drower's typewritten list of DC texts says of *DC 44*, "Beginning badly copied in by Shaikh Nejm."

The books do not belong to him, Sh. Negm insists, but to the poor middleman—his brother, who is only now leaving (has he missed the festival at home?). Sh. Negm assures Drower that the "*Diwan*" alone is worth the money. "We have none of this sort with us[22] this why I purchased them and if I lose 100 pounds I will not break my friendship with you anyhow and I don't treat you as a friend but as a sister."

This is the most terse of the priest's letters. After his signature he adds only *asuta* (a greeting conveying the hope of health) but leaves out the usual formulas of blessing. Three items seem noteworthy to me in this letter. First, even if the original owner has been paid, Sh. Negm still considers him the rightful owner of the books, because the money matter remains unsettled between Sh. Negm and Drower. Second, the texts are rare, in Sh. Negm's estimation. Third, relatives, even honorary ones, are more highly esteemed than friends.

Finally, on 25 November, a check for 11 dinars arrives in a registered letter. Sh. Negm's relief and gratitude is palpable. "By the grace of God on Thursday I will post them [the books] to you because I want to complete first the *ẓraẓta* and amend the sheets as you require." Drower has perceived that Sh. Negm was angry in his previous letter to her, which he denies. "I will never be angry at all throughout my life the reason is that I treat you just like my sister and not as a friend and if you see something does not suit you in my letter it is not my fault, but the fault of the clerk who writes the letter for me."[23] Nevertheless, he begs Drower to pardon him if he seemed cross. "I promise you that I shall use my utmost to search new books for you and purchase them for you, and the man who sold me these books I asked him for the remaining books and he promised to find them and send them to me in the near future."

Unfortunately, the local bank refuses to cash the check and sends it back to Baghdad after giving Sh. Negm a receipt as surety. He is told that the money will arrive on Wednesday. Undaunted, Sh. Negm ends his letter to Drower, "I assure you that I am always at your service." And on 30 November, he sends Drower the books, again expressly stating his loyalty to Drower, "Do not think that I am after ambitiousness with you I am taking you as my own sister." He signs himself as "yours truly brother in Faith."

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[22] Meaning: these texts are not known to—or in the possession of— priests in southern Iraq.

[23] To judge by the handwriting, Sh. Negm seems to be dictating this to the same scribe whose work may have given Drower the impression that Sheikh Negm was irritated at her.

Years—basically those of World War II—pass before Sh. Negm's next letter, dated 10 December 1946. Drower is now in England. Through her, Sh. Negm has obtained paper from the British Embassy in Baghdad. An official there, Captain Stewart Browne, on his way from Basra to Amara, stopped by to give the paper to Sh. Negm, but Sh. Negm himself was in Amara at the time.

Now, with a secure supply of paper, Sh. Negm assures Drower that he will start the copying-work for her (he does not say of *which* text). With pleasure, he recalls how Drower helped them "with a dictionary of the Mandaean language for our boys."[24] He credits her with aiding the Mandaeans in keeping their faith and practices and, by helping with the dictionary, has also contributed to secure the religion for future generations.

Sh. Negm has sent Drower a package of the local fruit, "a small quantity of dates." This may well have been exotic and welcome in England right after the war years. Sh. Negm wished to send a larger package, but the postal service did not allow it. But in about two weeks he will send "something small but a good thing for the children." All is well with the community, he says, and he mentions a number of priests by name. Among them are Sheikhs Dukhayl (i.e., Dakhil),[25] the Manduia *ganzibra*, and Sh. Muhie (= Mohi), also of the Manduia clan. Then there is Sh. Negm's brother Yahia, the important procurer of manuscripts.[26] Two Manduia brothers are named: the ganzibra Abdallah, son of Sh. Sam, of Qalʿat,[27] and Sh. Rumi. All of them—and Sh. Negm's own sons— send Drower their regards.[28] Toward the end of the letter, he states his plan to send her the old book when he has finished copying it (but it is not clear *which* book).

Responding to a letter of Drower's of 15 December 1947, Sh. Negm writes to her from Basra on 4 February of the next year, assuring her that he continues with his copywork. Sugar is rationed, and only barley bread is available, but he hopes that better times are ahead. On a more positive note, he informs Drower that he has initiated his own son, Abdullah,[29] into the priesthood, and Sh. Negm adds that "it is much better for him." The Panja festival (the five-day intercalary festival) lies ahead, and Drower is in the community's thoughts. "We think of you and all the kindness which you made for us … we shall never forget you." He wishes he could send a "majic carpet that you can fly and be with us once again." "May there be health and purity for you, O pure light, O sister in *kušṭa*," he adds at the end.

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[24] This might be *DC 4*, a glossary, which Sh. Negm compiled together with an English-speaking Mandaean (see Appendix C: DC documents, below).

[25] The uncle of Lamea Abbas Amara; see chap. 3.

[26] This priest officiated at the marriage of Mr. Sobbi and his wife, Shukrieh, and also at the marriage of Mr. Sobbi's parents.

[27] The ganzibra is the grandfather of Dr. Sinan Abdullah, of Niskayuna, New York.

[28] Several of these priests are depicted in *MII*. It is a pity that all the photographs in *MII* lack names of the persons. To identify them, one must confer with present-day Mandaeans who remember the depicted people. Lamea Abbas Amara has helped me in this task.

In a letter of 4 February 1948, Sh. Negm asks Drower to help Sh. Amara, who worked for the British Army during the war, at Shaiba, the British airport near Basra. Sh. Amara may be the man who is depicted on the far left in *MII*, plate 1a.[30] He and his family went to Bahrain, but now there is no work, says Sh. Negm. Evidently, with the war ended, the British had no more use for the aid of this Mandaean.

During the spring of 1949, Sh. Negm was elevated to *ganzibra* rank. Drower mentions this in her 18 May 1949 letter to Prof. Speiser.[31] And R. Macuch speaks of Sh. Negm as a *ganzibra* in Basra.[32] He may have lived there already, for when Yahia was waiting for funds, he stayed with his brother, Sh. Negm, in Basra.

Sh. Negm's last letter to Drower is dated 1 February 1950. He is immensely relieved that his son Abdullah (who was initiated into the priesthood in 1947) has completed his military service: "thank God he has finished." Military service remains a thorny issue for the traditionally pacific and pacifist Mandaeans.

In her letter to Prof. Speiser, Drower had mentioned that she would send Sh. Negm a copy of her newly published work, her translation of the Mandaean book of astrology.[33] Now, Sh. Negm has told Yahia about the translation.[34] Yahia has access to Mandaean texts of interest to Drower, and she has inquired about one in particular. Unfortunately, Sh. Yahia is in Persia, with the books, and will not be back to Iraq for a long time. But Sh. Negm will send the texts to Drower as soon as he can, he says. The texts Drower wishes to examine are: Diwan Dimouth Khoota, *Diwan Dasfir Owaly*, and *Diwan Kadaha Rab Alm*. The titles are garbled. *ATŠ* (*Alf Trisar Šuialia*)[35] probably hides behind the twisted title of the second one.

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[29] Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Negm, is now in the United Kingdom, as noted earlier.

[30] According to my information, he is Lamea Abbas Amara's paternal grandfather. Despite the epithet "Sheikh," Amara was not a priest; here the title implies honor and respect.

[31] See above, at the start of the current chapter. In this letter, Drower makes reference to the Jewish section of her *Water into Wine*. But this part was excised from her work and published posthumously as "Evergreen Elijah." For the story, see my edition of it.

[32] Rudolf Macuch, *Neumandäische Chrestomathie*, 7.

[33] Prof. Speiser had procured some of the funds required for the publication of Drower's *Book of the Zodiac*; see the foreword to that work, p. 4.

The only letter I have of Drower's to Sh. Negm is from 14 May 1951. It says that she has received one roll from him, *Admuth Kushta Qdaha Rabba*,[36] which she returns in disappointment. Her letter is stern, explaining that the condition of the scroll does not measure up to her standards: there is no colophon, and misspellings occur. "I cannot think that you would make such mistakes, so that perhaps the manuscript itself was written by a *yalufa* who was careless, or one who did not know the language very well." To ensure that Sh. Negm will understand the import of this letter, Drower addresses it to him in care of the American Mission, where he can have the letter translated. She regrets the inferior condition of the returned text: "I had hoped that I might make an offer to the owner of the roll that might have tempted him to part with his rolls, and that he might have taken the copies instead."

But these two rolls *did* come to the Bodleian Library, though they do not form part of the DC. In her article "A Mandaean Bibliography,"[37] Drower says that Sh. Negm's copy of the first one, *Dmuth Kušṭa* ("The Image of Truth"),[38] was a document too carelessly executed to be worth buying. Eventually, Drower arranged for the rolls to be purchased for the Bodleian, and these must have been the original, Persian rolls. According to Drower, "an aged man in South Persia—of priestly birth" had refused to sell them to her, even to have them photographed. I suspect that the documents belonged to Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi, for he was known for his great collection of Mandaic texts. We also know that Drower did meet him as early as 1932 (and possibly later, too).

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[34] *Sfar M.* has elicited almost no attention or comments by scholars, but see Francesca Rochberg's "The Babylonian Origins of the Mandaean Book of the Zodiac."

[35] Possibly, this is *DC 6*, one of two manuscripts of what became Drower's *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, published in 1960.

[36] This is a garbled title combining parts of two of the just mentioned *diwan*s (one is glued to the other). Later, both will become Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 12 and C 13 (see chap. 4 above).

[37] p. 34.

[38] I use this abbreviation; for the full, unwieldy title see chap. 4 n. 14 above. A Mandaean priest, Sh. Haithem, has made a translation of this scroll; no one has dealt with its neighboring scroll, to my knowledge.

Lady Drower came with Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi from Ahwaz to Khorramshahr in 1932 for a wedding (the wedding party also came from Ahwaz). This was the occasion for the only meeting of Mr. Nasser Sobbi (of New York) with her, when he was about eight years old. At that time, the *ganzibra* of Khorramshahr was Sh. Masboob, the last priest in Khorramshahr.[39]

Both this scroll and the one glued onto it, *Diwan Razia d̠-Abahata* (The Scroll, the Secrets of the Ancestors), are recorded in the Bodleian Library Record of Notable Accessions (pp. 167–68). The Library gratefully acknowledges Drower's role in the acquisition, and a copy of a piece of the artfully illustrated *Dmuth Kušṭa* is reprodued on p. 168 there.

Despite the unhappy tone of Drower's letter of 14 May 1951 to Sh. Negm, her friendly relationship with him continued. According to Drower's daughter, Mrs. Hackforth-Jones, Drower sent money for the rest of her life to assist Sh. Negm and his congregation. In a 26 October 1963 letter to Rudolf Macuch, Drower states that she has learned why Sh. Negm does not respond to her letters: he is afraid of being accused of correspondence with "imperialists." "People are being clapped into prison on such charges," Drower adds in her letter. She has learned that Sh. Negm still speaks of her with affection, calling her his "sister in Kušṭa." Via the American School, Drower plans to send him a copy of their newly published *Mandaic Dictionary*.

SHEIKH NEGM

In the very small postscript to *DC 2*, the book of prayers copied for Drower, Sh. Negm gives only a brief lineage, but it is crucial for historical reconstruction purposes. He says that his priestly name is Adam Negm, son of Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram Zihrun. Ram Zihrun is the cholera survivor, and the *riš d̠-dara*, "head of the age," a title known from other manuscripts. "He is my father's father," says Sh. Negm. This shows Sh. Negm as a biological grandson of Ram Zihrun.

Sh. Negm was not initiated by his own father, the priest (Zakia) Zihrun, who died around the age of sixty or sixty-five. Sh. Negm himself lived until 1976. According to information offered by present-day Mandaeans, Sh. Negm was initiated into priesthood by two Manduia *ganzibra*s, Sh. Damouk (= Mhatam Yuhana, son of Yahia Sam), Lamea's great-grandfather, and Sh. Sahan (an uncle of Sh. Sam, the great-grandfather of Dr. Sinan Abdullah of Niskayuna, New York).[40] Still, Sh. Negm always identifies himself as "Sh. Negm, son of Sh. Zahroon" in his letters to Lady Drower. We see that he tends to stress his biological paternal tie rather than his initiatory one. Other Mandaean priests do the same, as we have seen already and will see again. For instance, Ram Zihrun's cousin and brother-in-law Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, follows this pattern, due to the situation after the cholera. In this way, he honors his own biological father. In both Yahia Bihram's and Sh. Negm's cases, the biological father, who may have been slated to initiate his son, could not do so. But we have also seen that Sh. Jabbar of Ahwaz uses his biological lineage in his postscript to his *Ginza*,[41] even though in his case the father was not a priest.

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[39] He was the grandfather of Sh. Fauzi Masboob of Detroit, Michigan.

Rudolf Macuch is technically incorrect when he claims that Sh. Abdullah of Ahwaz initiated Sh. Negm,[42] for Sh. Abdullah (Sh. Negm's cousin) was a *tarmida*, and a *ganzibra* is required as chief "father," *rba*, in a priest's initiation. Perhaps Sh. Abdullah was present, essentially performing the initiation by supervision by one of the Manduia *ganzibra*s, Damouk and Sahan.[43]

When Mandaeans told Drower that there had been women priests in the past but there were none at present,[44] we may now have occasion to recall Bibia Mudalal, Ram Zihrun's wife and Sh. Negm's paternal grandmother. Again, we may ask why he did not tell Drower that his own grandmother had been a priest. (Perhaps the issue was controversial in Mandaean communities at the time.) As I have suggested elsewhere, Bibia Mudalal was perhaps the only "real" priest surviving the cholera of 1831.

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[40] Sh. Negm became a *tarmida* in 1920 and a *ganzibra* in 1947, according to information by Dr. Sinan Abdullah.

[41] See chap. 4.

[42] Rudolf Macuch, "Zur Grammatik und zum Wörterbuch des Mandäischen," 75.

[43] Sh. Abdullah, the son of Sh. Negm, married a daughter of Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi of Ahwaz. (Her name was Šarat; she died in England, where Sh. Abdullah lives).

[44] *MII*, 147.

Her sons are Sh. Negm's father, Zakia Zihrun, and Sh. Negm's uncle, Bihram.[45] By marrying Ram Zihrun, Bibia becomes linked to the Khaffagi and Durakia families—her own is Kamisia.

Among the sources helpful in tracing the activities and relationships of Sh. Negm are two texts owned by Mr. Nasser Sobbi in Flushing, New York. One is a copy of *MHZ*, copied by Sh. Negm in 1946, but with no place indicated. He gives his *maṣbuta* name as Adam br Simat. The lineage in *MHZ* is short. Mr. Sobbi also has another text transcribed by Sh. Negm, *Diw. Ab.* This one dates to 1942 and, like the previous document, has no place specified. In terms of its scribal lineages, the document is interesting because it shows almost no overlaps with the *Diw. Ab.* in *DC 8*. As in the prayer collection *DC 2*, which Sh. Negm copied for Drower (as we saw above), the lineage is "Adam, son of Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram Zihrun," etc.

As the beneficiary of *Diw. Ab.*, Sh. Negm identifies a "brother in Truth, free from all blemishes," namely, Siʿad, son of Paraš, son of Dihdar Rašab, and so on, of the Kuhailia lineage. This Siʿad is none other than the father of Sh. Jabbar of Ahwaz, Iran. I know this because Sh. Jabbar wrote out his biological lineage for me in 1996. Sh. Negm copied the text from Bihram Sam's scroll, and this Bihram Sam is *not* Sh. Negm's own maternal great-grandfather, but the same-named copyist of *DMʿL* in 1789.[46]

Regarding the difficult question of what I dub "the funnel of 1831," the direct, priestly lineages that continue unbroken despite the cholera of that year, we find the following: it seems that only the Khaffagis (= Kupašias) and the Kamisias (and, perhaps, the Riš Draz clan) directly survive the calamity qua priests. The Manduias, the Kuhailias, and other priest lineages are temporarily cut off with the cholera. Sh. Negm, a Khaffagi, can trace his direct lineage, in biological terms, to Ram Zihrun, the cholera survivor, and beyond. But in terms of Sh. Negm's initiation lineage, which is strictly a Manduia one, the line is broken. To honor his father, Sh. Negm always uses his biological lineage, as noted.

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[45] According to information from Sh. Haithem in Australia, Bihram was about 50 years old when he died in Amara. He was among the thirteen men initiated in 1831, right after the cholera had abated, by Ram Zihrun. Bihram was then young, about twenty years old.

[46] This Bihram Sam also copied the *Ginza* Add. 23,599 in the British Library, as noted in chap. 4.

Comparing Sh. Negm to Sh. Jabbar of Ahwaz[47]—a Choheili[48] and a *ganzibra* whose biological father was not a priest—we see that he, too, uses his biological, not his initiatory, lineage. But Sh. Jabbar's ancestral line contains priests in the tenth to the thirteenth generations. With respect to the Khaffagis, the long lineage of the Ahwaz priest Sh. Abdullah (Sh. Negm's cousin) terminates with him,[49] for none of his sons became priests. Perhaps it was clear that there would be a "leadership vacuum" left by Sh. Abdullah. In any case, Sh. Jabbar had become a priest already in 1948, and later two of his sons entered the priesthood. As long as the lay ancestors are "pure," there is no bar to priesthood for someone like Sh. Jabbar. And, as noted, in generations long past, Sh. Jabbar's ancestors were priests. Sh. Jabbar and his sons are known as Ṭawoosies, named for Sh. Jabbar's own father, Ṭawoos—whose other name is Siʿad, as we have seen, in the context of Mr. Sobbi's *Diw. Ab.*

In 1948, Sh. Jabbar became a *tarmida* in Qalʿat Saleh, Iraq, by the Manduia priest Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Sam. Sh. Jabbar travelled from Iran for the occasion, and his visa unfortunately was about to expire during the ritual proceedings, but Sh. Anisi, a Manduia relative of his initiator, intervened. This relative could do so because he enjoyed a special relationship with the Iraqi royalty: he was the jeweler to the King.[50]

Today, a Mandaean priest may, if asked, present two lineages: an initiatory and a biological one. Sh. Haithem, now in Australia, did just that some years ago.[51] Biologically, Sh. Haithem is a Kuhailia, with a lineage going back to around 1500, to Bihram BrHiia's father, Adam Zakia. But Sh. Haithem's initiator into priesthood is Sh. Abdullah of Baghdad, the son of Sh. Negm. These men are Khaffagis, as noted. Many of the current priests in Iraq and those now in exile from Iraq are linked by initiation (and at least one, Sh. Rafid of the Netherlands, even biologically) to Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Negm. That means that in terms of initiatiory lineages, they trace themselves back to Ram Zihrun, the cholera survivor, and further on in time.

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[47] Baptismal name: Mhatam Yuhana, son of Yahia.

[48] "Choheili" is the modern spelling for the frequently encountered clan name Kuhailia.

[49] He died around 95 years of age, in 1975, some two years after I met him.

[50] I owe this colorful anecdote to Dr. Sinan Abdullah of Niskayuna, New York. Dr. Abdullah is the grandson of Sh. Abdullah, son of Sam.

[51] The list was originally supplied by Sh. Rafid, son of Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Negm.

According to present-day information from Mandaeans, Ram Zihrun was about eighty years old when he initiated all the young men into priesthood in and right after 1831. I have long doubted whether this can be right. If it *is* correct, Ram Zihrun would have been 104 years old when he and his cousin and brother-in-law Yahia Bihram together copied *DC 28* in 1855.[52] This still seems incredible, even though we know that some Mandaean priests reach an extraordinarily high age. But these calculations would imply a considerable age difference between the cousins Ram Zihrun and Yahia Bihram. Ram Zihrun would then have been born around 1751, while Yahia Bihram was probably born around 1800. An added thought is, Was Bibia Mudalal, Yahia Bihram's sister, married to a much older man? I cannot settle these vexing time matters at present, but I tend to think that the two male cousins were fairly close in age.

* * *

As a bridging chapter to the one dealing with Yahia Bihram, Sh. Negm's grandfather's cousin and brother-in-law, I first devote a chapter to the southern Iraqi adventures of the German Orientalist Heinrich Petermann, who produced the first critical edition of the *Ginza*. In 1852, Petermann set out from his homeland to southern Iraq, in seach of Mandaeans, their texts, and their knowledge. Little did he know that his native informant would turn out to be the cholera survivor Yahia Bihram.

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[52] See chap. 7 on Yahia Bihram.

6 VISITING THE NATIVES: HEINRICH PETERMANN IN SUQ EŠ-ŠUYUK, 1854

Since boyhood, Heinrich Petermann (1801–76) had always dreamed of visiting the Orient.[1] Three groups had especially caught his interest: the Druzes, the Samaritans, and the Mandaeans.[2] Finally, in 1851, his opportunity to travel materialized, and he obtained a gracious leave as professor of Oriental languages in Berlin, a post he had held since 1837. The Prussian king directed Petermann to acquire Oriental antiquities, documents, coins, and other artifacts according to his own discretion and ability. Petermann left home in June 1852, setting off to Dresden, Vienna, Pesht, and points southeast.

After various adventures in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and elsewhere, Petermann arrives from Mosul in Baghdad, eager to meet Mandaeans. But he immediately finds that they are not there; rather, an estimated eight-day journey[3] to the south is required, to the village Suq eš-Šuyuk[4] on the Euphrates. This village belongs to the Beduin tribe of the Muntafiq, a people not to be trifled with, as Petermann will find. Armed with a number of references, among them letters from Col. Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (a pioneer in the decipherment of cuneiform) and from the Pasha of Baghdad,

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[1] Materials in this chapter and the next were published in my "Glimpses of a Life: Yahia Bihram, Mandaean Priest."

[2] However, Petermann was to become most famous as a specialist on Armenian.

[3] It will take longer.

[4] "The market of the sheikhs" or "the market of the elders," explains Petermann in his *Reisen im Orient*, 2:66 (all references hereafter are to vol. 2). I appear to have been the first person to borrow Petermann's *Reisen* from the Andover Library at Harvard Divinity School. This book, which is a rare one, was a gift to the Library from the Rev. Prof. J. H. Thayer, 27 August 1869.

Petermann leaves Baghdad on horseback on 11 January 1854.[5] In addition to the recommendation letters, he is also armed with real weapons: two loaded pistols and a *jatagan*, described as an implement somewhere between a dagger and a sword, a long knife sharpened on the inside edge.[6]

Cholera still persists in Hilla, south of Baghdad, where journeying by horse is replaced by a series of boat rentals. The sailing voyage takes Petermann through dangerous Beduin territory. In the night, birds are flushed, shrieking, at the sound of the rudder; jackals howl; and Petermann's skipper is anxious about the Beduins, who, unseen on the darkened shores, cry threats towards the passing boat, "Go away from us!" Petermann relies on his two pistols and his *jatagan*, which is used at least once to straighten out a boat rental about to go awry. The area teems with robbers.

On Tuesday, 24 January, in the early morning, Petermann reaches Suq eš-Šuyuk. Unfortunately, the powerful Sheikh Manṣur of the Muntafiq is away, camping three hours to the north, preparing to engage other, hostile Beduin tribes in battle. But Petermann will be without protection if he does not find someone to accept his recommendation letters. He goes to the richest Shi'a in town, a hajji,[7] who seems to give him a cool reception. No pipe is offered to him, for a non-Muslim would make the pipe impure and unfit for any further use. The hajji's Abyssinian slave and his Indian servant hover around Petermann, eager for news about the Turkish-Russian War.[8] The hajji himself remains quite uninterested in the war, but he does offer Petermann a house, a brick building partially used for the storage of dates (with much vermin). Petermann puts up his tent on the roof and together with his Maronite servant occupies two rooms downstairs. Now, where are the Mandaeans? Petermann waits for the first one to show up.

He does. It is Yahia Bihram, who in Petermann's book goes only by his first name.[9] The only priest in Suq eš-Šuyuk, Yahia is about 40 years old, says Petermann,[10] and outfitted like the local Beduins in a brown and white cloak and a *keffiyeh* (headcloth). Silently analyzing Yahia's features, Petermann finds him characterized by "friendliness mixed with cunning."[11]

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[5] Ibid., 67.

[6] Ibid., 80.

[7] A man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

[8] The Crimean War, which had begun in October 1853.

[9] In fact, Petermann misunderstands Yahia Bihram's name, thinking that his name is "Yahia, son of Bihram."

[10] This cannot be quite correct, for Yahia Bihram was born around 1800.

[11] *Reisen*, 86.

While in Baghdad, Petermann has already heard that Yahia recently promised two Englishmen all kinds of information about Mandaeism but left these matters unfulfilled.

On the other hand, the German visitor is horrified to hear that his fame has preceded him, for Yahia already knows of Petermann and that he is interested in the Mandaeans. Petermann worries that Yahia will tell him nothing substantial about the religion, for the Mandaeans are known to be reticent on the subject of their beliefs. Consequently, Petermann emphasizes that he is a philologist, for he wants, above all, to see the Mandaean sacred literature. Then Yahia voices his own worries. Is Petermann Jewish; has he ever been Jewish; were any of his ancestors Jewish? Taken aback, Petermann in good conscience answers: no.

Conscious of local custom, decorum, and the safety of his pupil, Yahia is insistent on one point: that Petermann must see the Muntafiq sheikh. The priest does not want to delve deeply into the Mandaean teachings with Petermann until clearance has been gained from the highest authority. Petermann waits, entertains people visiting him in his roof tent, and makes scattered observations on the weather and on the local scene. A lingering cholera still persists, with seven Mandaeans dead the past year, though it is nothing like the epidemic of twenty-three years earlier, which cut down two thirds of the Suq eš-Šuyuk population. Yahia tells Petermann that Adam Yuhana, Yahia's father, was the last really knowledgable Mandaean priest, mastering everything of the language, the teachings, and the rituals. He died in the 1831 cholera, he tells Petermann, a fact *we* know from Yahia's colophons.

Suq eš-Šuyuk was founded only fifty years earlier, and it has ten thousand inhabitants, Yahia informs Petermann, who doubts this number although he concedes that the town is of considerable size, with several markets. The Muslim population is divided roughly half and half between Sunni and Shi'a, and there are some Jews, who have their synagogue. A single Christian family from Baghdad also lives in the town. The rest are Mandaeans, who reside in their own quarter, on the opposite riverbank. Petermann's house is on the river,[12] and from his rooftop he sees large palm forests in both directions, with the desert stretching beyond. Under his specially made Arabic cloak, Petermann keeps his European clothes. He wears a fez, for his fedora-type hat, now discarded, has attracted unwelcome attention in Baghdad.

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[12] On the Muslim side, of course.

Yahia decides it is time to visit the Muntafiq sheikh, Manṣur ibn Sadun, upriver in his war camp. One morning, Yahia brings a large boat, equipped with a Persian rug and a pillow so that his German pupil and he himself may travel together in comfort. Petermann sits smoking the pipe brought by his Maronite servant. One cannot travel anywhere in the Orient without one's pipe and servant, for if nothing else, the servant must carry the master's pipe. A European needs to make the impression of belonging to as high a rank as possible; if not, he will be considered weak and low.

Petermann and the Mandaean priest sail through dense palm forests, soon leaving behind the Mandaean huts on one side of the river, Muslim habitations on the other. Outside the village, there are intricate networks of canals. At noon, they arrive at the sheikh's camp, disembark, and Yahia walks next to Petermann, while the Maronite servant, behind them, carries the two loaded pistols and a dagger (*tsubuk*). Petermann gives a detailed description of the sheikh's black slave making coffee for the visitor. The sheikh is surrounded by his heavily armed guards. Despite the warlike ambience, Petermann's visit goes well, and Yahia tells Petermann how much to tip the sheikh's servants. The men return to Suq eš-Šuyuk.

Now, work can begin. Yahia comes every day for six hours, except on Sunday, the holiday, to teach Petermann the language and to read with him the entire corpus of Mandaean literature (such as it is present in Suq eš-Šuyuk). Yahia is paid for his services. Petermann dares not take any notes during the lessons but writes them down after the priest has left.

Yahia soon acquires respect for Petermann, who learns speedily. Petermann considers Mandaic a kind of Syriac jargon and breezes through the literature, confidently stating to his readers that by the end of his stay (in early May) he understands the Mandaean texts better than all the Mandaean lay people and most of the priests.[13] Yahia cautions Petermann that Yahia's own father, Adam Yuhana, taught Mr. Taylor in Basra for twelve years, so how can Petermann expect to learn it all in a mere few months! Twelve years were hardly enough for initiation into the Mandaean mysteries.

Even though Petermann and Yahia do not work on Sundays, the two do see one another on those days. In a reversal of the visiting pattern, Petermann goes to the priest on Sundays. Yahia's twelve-year-old son comes to take the scholar across the river in a boat. However, Petermann is disappointed at being barred from entering the priest's house, for he is only allowed into its courtyard. Here he sits every Sunday, smoking cigars brought from Beirut, for he dares not bring his pipe. The cigars create a stir, anyway. Shut out from the main house, unclean but meriting hospitality, Petermann smokes, is served food, drinks coffee, and ponders his position. He observes that Yahia uses neither tobacco nor coffee.

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[13] *Reisen*, 87.

The Mandaeans must originally have been Christians, Petermann concludes, though he wonders how they could have strayed so far from the truth. He describes the features of the Mandaean *mandi* in Suq eš-Šuyuk, and he is allowed to come to the burial ground to see a funeral. He notes (as I did in Iran almost a century and a half later) that the purity of women of priestly family prohibits them from taking food with lay people. They also eat apart from the men of priestly family, even apart from their husbands.[14]

Petermann witnesses festivities during Panja (*Parwanaiia*), the five-day intercalary period. He observes Yahia going from house to house to slaughter cleansed lambs. Yahia's three-year-old son is among those baptized at the great baptismal feast. Sitting on a carpet and leaning on a cushion solicitously provided by Yahia, Petermann watches the events in the yard in front of the *mandi*. The priest even lights Petermann's pipe with coals from the ritual fire basin. But as Yahia, between ritual segments, relaxes, converses, and entertains himself with his fellow Mandaeans, the slightly scandalized Petermann is struck by the lack of any sustained air of piety.[15]

During Petermann's stay, Yahia tells him a number of long legends,[16] some of which are variations of Persian heroic and fairy tales, and some of which appear in Drower's *MII*. However miraculous in genre, certain stories appear to have grains of historicity.[17] One tells of a malicious Shi'a who called his dog by the same name as his neighbor, a Mandaean *ganzibra*, who, at first innocently, answered whenever the Shi'a called to his dog. In anguish, the *ganizbra* asked Šamiš, the sun, for help. As it is a Mandaean story, the Muslim is, as expected, severely punished. But the *ganzibra* does not escape unscathed, either. He is branded on his hand with a dog's paw in retaliation for appealing to the sun at the wrong time of the day. The sun makes his heavenly round in the daytime and should not be disturbed then!

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[14] Ibid., 116.

[15] Ibid., 463.

[16] These begin on ibid., 100.

[17] For instance, the one about the famous Mandaean "head of the people," Adam Abul Faraj, who was a real person, and also a wonder worker (see *MII*, 292).

As Yahia and Petermann sit working in the tent pitched on the roof, they are constantly interrupted by visitors eager to gawk at Petermann and intrigued about the peculiar working relationship between the two men. When Muslim callers arrive, all teaching of Mandaean texts must of course stop, and Petermann maintains stony silence until the people leave. But his patience is sorely tested by those who stay around for hours. Even while he is alone at breakfast or writing in his tent, the curious crowd surrounds Petermann, and at one point his servant uses a stick to hit and threaten younger onlookers, for the "Beg" must work in peace and quiet.

Yahia's parishioners often come around to him, for as he is their only learned man, they need him to write letters and other documents. He is also the community's doctor, and Petermann notes that Yahia has acquired a modicum of Western medical knowledge, which he pairs with exorcisms and other traditional methods. On one occasion, a distressed Mandaean man appears, for his wife, who has recently given birth, is possessed by the devil. Yahia administers bloodletting and exorcisms. He describes the woman's symptoms to Petermann, who is up to date with his own culture's high standards of diagnostics and remarks to his readers that "the milk had risen to her head."[18]

Petermann is deeply concerned about his own health. He avoids drinking too much of the strong coffee, for he finds that it agitates his blood. There are no springs or wells in the village, and although it is dirty, the Euphrates water tastes good. When he has a cold, Petermann adds a few drops of port wine to his water. A Shi'a once secretly brings him homemade wine. And a young Muslim boy wishes to sell Petermann a pig,[19] a tempting offer that he soberly refuses, fearing the reactions of both Muslims and Mandaeans.

Around Petermann, a great menagerie of animal life thrives. The Euphrates teems with numerous kinds of fish, snakes, and turtles. Birds abound. In Petermann's house, sparrows, spiders, scorpions, ants, moths, worms, lice, rats, and mice make their home. Poison against the rats and mice only helps them become fat and healthy, for they steal water from the water pots and the poison in their stomachs is diluted. It is so arid that flies settle immediately on Petermann's field notes to drink the ink before it dries off the page. Mindful of the abundant lice, Petermann wonders whether Yahia ever washes his long, braided hair tucked up in his headgear.

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[18] *Reisen*, 122.

[19] Wild pigs, highly destructive to the crops and dangerous to humans, are hunted in the marshes, according to Wilfred Thesiger's accounts in *The Marsh Arabs*.

In Suq eš-Šuyuk grow twelve different kinds of dates, while Basra has sixty-four, Petermann learns. He seldom goes out to explore the surroundings, not because he is afraid (he takes full confidence in the protection obtained from the Muntafiq sheikh) but because he finds the area uninteresting. Instead, he enjoys the company of his servant when Yahia's lessons are over and no visitors come calling. And he circles his roof on half-hour-long walks, gazes at the landscape, and contemplates boatfuls of south Persian and Indian pilgrims on their way to Mecca. Charmed, he observes children playing with kites, just as in Europe. On one rare outing, Petermann notes that the people gather salt for rubbing hides, not for eating. And one day, Yahia takes him to visit a manufacturer of sesame oil.

Only once during his time in the village does he meet a European, who is none other than J. E. Taylor, former Vice-Consul of Basra and former pupil of Yahia's father Adam Yuhana. Taylor has just been on an archeological expedition that was cut short by threatening political unrest. He tells Petermann about the cuneiform inscriptions he has found.[20] Petermann clearly treasures this visit by a fellow European scholar.

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In three months, Petermann has read through almost the entire Mandaean literature owned by Yahia. And, during the talks between the two men, Yahia offers many accounts of mythologies found in the *Ginza* and gives a sort of overview of the oral heritage of Mandaean history. Two hundred and forty years after John the Baptist, the Mandaeans disappeared from the earth, Yahia begins. Then sixty thousand of them came back, descending from Mšunia Kušṭa, the Lightworld area of ideal counterparts, the place to which all Mandaeans ascend at bodily death. The earthly Mandaean headquarters were, next, in Damascus, and the holy religious scriptures are still held in the Umayyad mosque there. After Anuš bar Danqa's time[21] the

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[20] In that same year, 1854, Taylor conducts excavations at Ur and discovers Eridu.

[21] Mid seventh century (for the Mandaean ethnarch, see chap. 9 below on the Liturgies).

Mandaeans lived in Baghdad, where they had four hundred *mandi*s. Toward the end of the Abbasid dynasty, they lost power.[22]

Listening to all this, Petermann thinks that the next event, the reestablishing of sixty *mandi*s in Baghdad, may have occurred when the Osman (Ottoman) Sultans came to power from 1281 on. The *mandi*s were destroyed at more or less regular intervals, however, and the Mandaeans moved south, from Baghdad to Amara. Here, Petermann is told, an old stone inscription reveals the presence in Amara of twelve thousand "left-handed ones," people who work with their left hands only. These, Yahia implies, are obviously Mandaeans, who favor the right for the work of purity and would reserve the left for secular activities.

Petermann's comfort with all this allegedly "historical" information increases as Yahia's account heads toward more recent centuries. Yahia gives a veritable demographical list of Mandaean areas in the recent past and the immediate present, and there is no reason to doubt that this rests on firm knowledge. First, Yahia tells of the recent history of the Mandaeans in Šuštar. There the Mandaeans had their own quarter,[23] and, in recent times, four hundred Mandaean houses and a *mandi* stood in the quarter. But now, says Yahia, only four Mandaean families, headed by men who are goldsmiths, live there. Their *mandi* is destroyed, but they have a *ganzibra* (Yahia does not name him)[24] whose family dwells in Qurna, at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Near Šuštar live about thirty Mandaean families, farmers. Around the year 1801, thirty men, together with their wives and children, converted to Islam for a double reason: governmental oppression and dissatisfaction with the Mandaean priests.

In Dezful,[25] there are fifty Mandaean goldsmiths and about thirty farmers. Yahia gives the number of priests there as thirty (which seems extraordinary high), though the Dezfulis have no *mandi*. Taking care to correct a common misunderstanding, Yahia stresses that the Mandaeans do *not* believe that John the Baptist is buried in nearby Susa, for the famous tomb there belongs to the prophet Daniel.[26] Where John might be buried is a moot question, for Anuš took him directly to Mšunia Kušṭa. The Christian notion of Herod having John beheaded is utter invention, Yahia assures Petermann.[27] At the moment, in 1854,[28] no Mandaeans live in Huwaiza, for the river has dried up, says Yahia, but near the town are twenty-five Mandaean goldsmiths. Other than these, there are no Mandaeans in Persia, where, according to the law, they may own houses but have to rent land and gardens, says Yahia.

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[22] Historical kernel or not, this would coincide with the coming of the Mongols.

[23] As I learned in Iran in April 1996, this was accurate. With several carfuls of Mandaeans, I visited the old section of Šuštar called "Subbi Kush," "the Mandaean area," now inhabited by Muslims (see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 6).

[24] Perhaps he is Ram Zihrun.

[25] "Where Susa was," says Petermann (*Reisen*, 455), which to me seems incorrect, for the two towns were and are separate.

Regarding Mandaeans on Turkish territory (i.e., the Mandaeans in Iraq), Yahia also supplies detailed information. In 1854, Amara has a large Mandaean population, with three hundred goldsmiths, ironworkers, and boat-builders. The community includes two *ganzibra*s and two *tarmida*s. The year before, in 1853, Amara held only a hundred Mandaean men, but very recent immigrants from Suq eš-Šuyuk increased the numbers. There is no *mandi*; the people go to Huwaiza for rituals.[29] In and near Qurna are about sixty men; they earlier possessed a *mandi*, but it is now destroyed. The Mandaeans who used to live in Basra all moved away, due to the bad climate, says Yahia. In Muhammerah[30] are four goldsmiths and one priest, but the latter stays there only intermittently. And finally, right there, in Suq eš-Šuyuk, now live sixty Mandaean men, with one priest, Yahia himself. Their *mandi* is the only one in existence at the time.[31] Yahia puts the total Mandaean population at five hundred and sixty men, or fifteen hundred Mandaean souls.

Petermann is interested in a report from his Maronite servant, who tells his master that there are Mandaeans in Lebanon. He knows this because not long ago he accompanied a Russian bishop traveling in Lebanon and the bishop told him of forty men, "Disciples of John the Baptist," living among the cedars on the northern slope. Petermann knows that this fits with the report by the Swedish grammarian Matthias Norberg,[32] who told of a conversation with a Maronite[33] saying that such a people lived on the eastern Lebanese mountain slope in a now ruined place. Yezidis used to live there, too, as did other obscure religious groups.[34]

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[26] True enough: in April 1996, Mandaeans took me to Daniel's tomb.

[27] This agrees with what Mandaeans have told me, too.

[28] And also in 1996.

[29] The distance between Amara and Huwaiza is roughly sixty miles. (These days such treks are of course impossible, Amara being in Iraq and Huwaiza in Iran). The British traveler Isabella Bird visited the Mandaean quarter of Amara in 1891, where she was charmed by the beauty of the Mandaeans while she perused their silver and gold work (*Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*, 17–18).

[30] Then in Turkish, now in Iranian territory.

[31] I assume there was one in Huwaiza; otherwise, the Amara Mandaeans would hardly go there for rituals.

The Mandaeans must have taken refuge in Lebanon at some point, Petermann assumes. He is eager to hear Yahia's reaction to all of this, but the priest counters the report with no fewer than ten points. It is all baseless legend, Yahia insists, but he suggests that it might have something to do with the legend of Qiqel (or "Kekal," as Petermann spells it), the Mandaean priest who was seduced by Ruha to change the holy texts and add on new, spurious ones.[35] If so-called "Mandaeans" live in Lebanon, they bear no relation to the real ones, Yahia implies.

Petermann's stay in Suq eš-Šuyuk comes to an abrupt, surprising end. The Muntafiq sheikh has gone to the Pasha in Baghdad with tribute exacted from the village population at great excess. In his absence, the sheikh's brother Nasir oppresses the locals even more. During the last days of April 1854, a black slave is murdered in the village, but the crime remains unsolved. No one comes forward, and as a result heavy fines are imposed on the entire population of Suq eš-Šuyuk. Nasir's officials conduct house searches. Muslims hide, some Jews are jailed, and all the Mandaeans flee overnight to Amara.[36] Before he leaves with his family, Yahia gives some of his valuables into Petermann's care. The two men will link up a few days later.

Without his Mandaean teacher, Petermann has no reason to stay on in the town. He rents a boat and begins heading north toward Baghdad. When he meets up with Yahia on a canal, the priest asks the Great Mana and the First Life to protect Petermann, who also receives a Mandaean amulet against demons and the dangers of travel. Yahia accompanies Petermann on the boat for a little while, but then the scholar is on his own, secured by his Mandaean blessings and the amulet. He also possesses further means of defense, for in a market of Suq eš-Šuyuk Petermann has acquired weapons in addition to his two pistols and the long knife. He might well need these now, as he yet again enters treacherous territories. Sailing on toward Baghdad, encountering other adventures, Petermann boasts that he is not afraid of lions or Beduins, but he admits to a fear of snakes and fever.

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[32] Norberg made the first attempt to translate the *Ginza*, as noted in the Introduction.

[33] His name is given as Vikarius Germanus Conti.

[34] All this is in *Reisen*, 456.

[35] The story of Qiqel is in *MII*, 273. See also chap. 15 below.

[36] *Reisen*, 137, with note.

And here ends Petermann's sojourn in southern Babylonia. It is unlikely that he ever saw his Mandaean teacher again.

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It seems a bit odd that Petermann hardly ever dwells on the impact of the 1831 cholera on Yahia and his fellow religionists. That traditional Mandaeism would have perished without the agency of Yahia and his cousin and brother-in-law Ram Zihrun does not appear to quite permeate the German scholar's consciousness. In passing, he says that Yahia, "prevented by external circumstances," had been unable to become a priest until he was past the age of twenty.[37] But Petermann must know something of the full weight of these "external circumstances."

Petermann's account reveals telling details about his own outsider status vis-à-vis Yahia and other village inhabitants. The Mandaeans themselves, dwelling on the riverbank opposite the other villagers, remain separate from the Muslims. Together with the Jews and the single Christian family in Suq eš-Šuyuk, the Mandaeans constitute the minority of "the People of the Book." Everyone—Sunni, Shi'a, and minorities alike—lives at the mercy of the powerful Muntafiq sheikh, as Suq eš-Šuyuk is eight days' journey distant from any direct influence of the Baghdad government.

An arresting image emerges, one of ever-negotiated concentric circles of power and oppression. The visitor Petermann—an unclean and a Christian, but a scholar and a European—merits respect and honor while depending entirely on the protection of the local ruler. At the same time, Petermann enjoys the immunity of the odd man out, for he remains secure and above suspicion in the matter of the murdered black slave. While all other Suq eš-Šuyuk inhabitants suffer repercussions, Petermann calmly packs up and leaves, literally catching the next available vessel.

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[37] Ibid., 464.

The next chapter focuses on Yahia Bihram, his life, and his text-copying activities. The 1854 interlude with Petermann remains just that, and in his colophons and postscripts Yahia Bihram never mentions the German scholar. So far in my colophon research, no other Mandaean priest offers a fuller description of his life than does Yahia Bihram. As we shall see, much of it is heartbreaking, as Yahia Bihram focuses on the cholera and its aftermath.

7 THE LIFE OF YAHIA BIHRAM

With the German philologist Heinrich Petermann[1] we possess, as we have just seen, a special testimony from the year 1854 to Yahia Bihram's life in Margab, the Mandaean quarter of the village Suq eš-Šuyuk, on the lower Euphrates.[2] In the present chapter, Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Kamisia family, will emerge in a different light than before. I rely mainly on Yahia Bihram's own colophonic postscripts.

He holds a special place in Mandaean history. Together with his cousin and brother-in-law, Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, Kupašia,[3] Yahia Bihram was responsible for rescuing Mandaeism from certain extinction during the time immediately following the great *muṭana*, the cholera of 1831, the so-called "Plague of Šuštar."[4] All the Mandaean priests died in the far-sweeping tragedy.[5] Due to the efforts of the two surviving *šganda*s (ritual helpers), both of them sons of famous *ganzibra*s, the religion continues to this day.

Like his cousin, Ram Zihrun was a prolific copyist of texts in the aftermath of the epidemic, though he gives very little information on the effects of this cataclysm on the Mandaeans. Yahia Bihram, in contrast, offers vivid and moving descriptions of this and other events, and of his own life. Trained as a *šganda* by his father, Yahia Bihram joined with his older cousin Ram Zihrun to reestablish Mandaeism. I consider them unsung heroes in the history of Mandaeism.

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[1] See note 1 to the previous chapter regarding previous publication of parts of the current chapter.

[2] As noted in the previous chapter, Suq eš-Šuyuk lies on the lands belonging to the tribe of the Muntafiq, whose capital is Naṣiriyah (see Thesiger, *Marsh Arabs*, 103). Until recent decades, some Mandaeans still inhabited Naṣiriyah.

[3] We have met Ram Zihrun earlier. He is the copyist of many texts, including the *Ginza DC 22*, and he is the grandfather of Sheikh Negm and of Sheikh Abdullah Khaffagi.

[4] About half the population of this city perished. The cholera began in September and lasted until January the next year. I am grateful to Professor John E. Woods (Chicago) for these details (pers. comm., 14 June 1996). The epidemic spread throughout much of present-day Iraq and Iran.

[5] As noted earlier, Yahia Bihram's sister, Bibia Mudalal, may already have been a priest before the cholera, and if so, she would have been the only priestly survivor.

In Suq eš-Šuyuk in 1831, devastated by their loss of family and fellow Mandaeans, Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun joined forces as the chief carriers of the Mandaean priestly tradition. *Yalufa*s and life-long *šganda*s, they saw the need to immediately create a new group of leaders for the traumatized survivors. In the absence of other religious authorities, Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun first consecrated one another as *tarmida*s.[6] Yahia Bihram later elevated his older cousin into the ganzibrate. In a relatively short time, the two men trained thirteen *šganda*s in the village of Suq eš-Šuyuk. But while the laborious training and consecrations occurred, precious time and fellow religionists were lost, for Mandaeans cannot get married without a proper priesthood. Consequently, many converted to Islam.[7]

Still, the two newly minted priests had saved their religion. Starting immediately in 1831, and for the next several decades, the two men carry on text-copying, Yahia Bihram transcribing at least six documents that now belong to the DC. His testimonies in his colophonic postscripts describe not only the conditions produced by the cholera, but also later times of other hardships, including cruel persecutions of the Mandaeans. In what follows, I offer information from Yahia Bihram's postscripts, more or less in temporal sequence. In order to convey the scribe's own voice, I give several lengthy quotations.

DC 35: MAṢBUTA OF HIBIL ZIWA

Yahia Bihram copies the copiously illustrated *DC 35*, *Maṣbuta* of Hibil Ziwa (*MHZ*), in the year of the cholera, 1831. His large postscript, obviously added later, tells of events during a period stretching at least to 1848. At the beginning of his *MHZ* postscript, he includes the traditional formula asking for Lightworld blessings on a number of people, including his father and mother, his teacher, his two wives, his offspring, and his siblings.[8] At this point, an innocent reader might not know that Yahia Bihram's parents and other mentioned persons are dead, victims of the cholera.

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[6] In *MD*, 488a, s.v. *TMM*, Drower and Macuch refer to a colophon in the *DC 36* ms. of *HG*, saying that the colophon contains the expression "I am Yahia Bihram, and Ram Zihrun became mine," i.e., Ram Zihrun became Yahia Bihram's initiator. However, this expression is not in the facsimile text, and it seems that the postscript part of *HG* must have become mixed up with that of the other *HG* manuscript, *DC 9*. Drower's translation of the colophon does not cohere with that of the facsimile text (I return to the copyist lineages in *HG* in chap. 15).

[7] These details come from Petermann, *Reisen*, 464 with note.

Recalling a feature we have seen earlier (e.g., in chap. 5)—the difference between a priest's biological and his initiatory lineage— we note that Yahia Bihram's father and his initiator are two different men. His father, the *ganzibra* Adam Yuhana, perished in the *muṭana*. However, Yahia Bihram consistently calls himself "Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana," seemingly obscuring the unusual conditions of his initiation. But *once*, in the blessing formula at the start of *MHZ*,[9] Yahia Bihram makes a clear distinction between his father, Adam Yuhana, and his teacher, Ram Zihrun. Ram Zihrun designates *his* ancestry by locating himself in relation to his own father. This makes sense in the current emergency, in which both men, trained since childhood, honor their biological fathers. We see here a kind of "double" teacher-position, the two cousins being indebted both to their fathers and to one another.

Yahia Bihram belongs to the Qindila ("lamp"), Kamisia, and Riš Draz families. As noted in chapter 5, these are among the very few unbroken priestly lineages after the cholera. Yahia Bihram lost almost all of his relatives, but he has at least a brother and a sister, Bibia Mudalal (mentioned already), who became the wife of Ram Zihrun. If she was already a priest in 1831, and as such the only surviving priest, one may ask why she did not initiate her brother and her future husband into priesthood. This question cannot be answered at present, but I suspect that there may be a prohibition against a woman priest initiating male ones.

Why the two men were not made priests before the *muṭana*, during the lifetime of their fathers, we do not know. Ironically, it seems that precisely the lack of early, traditional priestly status saved their lives; otherwise, they too would probably have perished along with the other priests. Cholera contagion travels predominantly by water, and priests, who spend much of their time in and by the water and also drinking contaminated water, would become virtually automatic victims.

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[8] Comparing this list with its equivalent in the blessing formula in *DC 36* (one of two DC copies of *ATŠ*), one sees that the current one contains additional names of children, and the name of a second wife. Yahia Bihram did *not* copy *DC 36*, which stems from 1677, but he had access to the old collection (he probably owned it) and patched it. As he worked on the text, he put at its beginning the blessing formula with his own name and those of relatives (see Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 3, 109–10). Because the names are fewer, as noted, Yahia Bihram may have been younger when he worked on this text than when he copied *MHZ*. (For *ATŠ*, see chap. 13 below).

[9] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 30.

Yahia Bihram copies *MHZ* from the text of his uncle, the *ganizbra* Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun (Sabur, Dihdaria, and Baṭahaiia clans). The two main colophons in *MHZ* come later in the text.[10] Yahia Bihram concludes most of his work in the house of a fellow priest, Zihrun, in the village of Nihirat[11] (near Suq eš-Šuyuk) on the Euphrates, but he draws the pictures while he is in Qurna, at the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris (perhaps a scroll there had illustrations of a better quality). For three months, Yahia Bihram stays in Zihrun's house, grateful to his host for food and kindness.[12]

Then, continuing his postscript, Yahia Bihram begins to tell about the past, both remote and recent. His father's house was in Basra, he says, a big house that sat next to the one inhabited by the British Vice-Consul J. E. Taylor. We are alreay familiar with him, and we know that Adam Yuhana, Yahia Bihram's father, conducted religious and philosophical discussions with this British official. As seen in chapter 4, many of the Mandaean texts in the British Library came to Colonel Taylor from Adam Yuhana.

When Yahia Bihram was a young man of fourteen, "the English governor in the East from London"[13] sent for his father, the *ganzibra*. This person remains unnamed. But Yahia Bihram then mentions another one, a *padria* (probably a priest), whose name seems to be Joseph Ayliffe.[14] Adam Yuhana defeated this clergyman's religious arguments. Third, Mr. Taylor—the "Consul-Beg"—wished to be instructed in the Mandaean religion. So successful was the *ganzibra* that Mr. Taylor believed Mandaeism was the true religion, but for fear of the governor Mr. Taylor kept his insights to himself. After giving this information, Yahia Bihram continues,

> As for me, it was when he [i.e., Taylor, it seems] was in Basra that he taught me the language of the French, English, and the language of the

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[10] *Haran Gawaita*, 84–85. Drower omits much of this in her translation.

[11] The spelling varies; it is also "Anhirat."

[12] This and subsequent information is in ibid., 86–92.

[13] Ibid., 91.

[14] Ibid., 92. Drower makes a conjecture as to the precise name.

> Armenians[15]—may Hibil Ziwa forgive me my sins!—for when I was with these (*people*) I did not apostatize. When I was little, I was with Christians and learnt words of their language of all kinds and sorts; but I did not apostatize … nor did I eat of their food.[16]

Yahia Bihram does not always follow a direct line when he recalls the past. But the *MHZ* postscript description of the aftermath of the cholera appears all in one piece. He begins,

> And now, O our brothers that shall succeed us, know that in the year of Friday, the year AH 1247, the great plague came, and not one of the *ganzibras* or priests survived, and many people departed the body. Then, when the world was quieter and there was calm, (*we*) *literates* arose on the Day of Parwanaiia and we prayed the "Devotions," and we consecrated a cult-hut. After the consecration, one esteemed *yalufa* (*literate*) set the crown on one of the *yalufas* in the cult-hut. He prayed the "Devotions" for sixty days, and celebrated a *masiqta* for his teacher;[17] and they consecrated one another, one by one (*as priests*).[18]

Three or four years later, in Margab (the Mandaean quarter of Suq eš-Šuyuk), a quarrel broke out between the priests and the local laypeople. (Yahia Bihram tells about this in the postscript to *DC 24*; see below). The priests left for Basra. Later, Yahia Bihram andother people went toward Šuštar, but on the road to that town Arabs robbed him. His loss was considerable, for he mentions that his parental house had been a rich one, and he probably carried most of his belongings. Trying to recover his goods, Yahia Bihram went to the sheikh of the tribe of the Arabs who had stolen his goods. The thieves were apprehended, though Yahia Bihram received a compensation that amounted to very little. The worth of the entire loot was seven thousand piastres, but Yahia Bihram ended up with near nothing, for fees and payments (*baksheesh*) took the rest—a perennial tale![19]

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[15] Rudolf Macuch corrects this to "Germans." See Macuch, review of *The Haran Gawaita* and *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa*, 363. Macuch here made crucial corrections to Drower's translations of the two documents, and I take these into account in the following (and in chap. 15 on *HG*).

[16] *Haran Gawaita*, 92. In the book, Drower then translates the text belonging to the figures in the manuscript, but this procedure renders the text out of sequence, for Yahia Bihram's postscripts end the manuscript (see ibid., 93–96, and the facsimile at the back).

[17] Prescribed acts for priest initiation; see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 9.

[18] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 87–88.

[19] Ibid., 88.

Worse was to come, for further to the southeast, dire threats were directed at Muhammerah (Khorramshahr). The governor of Syria and Iraq, Ali Paša, was about to burn the town.[20] While in Šuštar, Yahia Bihram had obtained many Mandaean books and scrolls, which he had left behind in Muhammerah. Now, at the rumor of imminent conflagration, he went to the river Karun,[21] in order to warn the Mandaeans to flee from Muhammerah. But he was too late, it seems. The rulers had forbidden the tribes to escape in their ships,[22] but the local Muslims fled hastily across the waterway, Šatt al-Arab, in their barges, leaving the Mandaeans behind. The only ones to escape were two old women and a seven-year-old boy. Later captured by soldiers, the boy was subsequently ransomed out of an army camp.[23]

Yahia Bihram seems to have traveled ceaselessly during the years after the cholera, and it is difficult to keep track of his movements. Many of the places he names are so far unknown to me and absent from accessible maps. At times, he is fleeing disasters; in other instances, he is obviously voyaging in order to instruct fellow Mandaeans. In 1837, persecuted by local peasants (*where* is unclear) and, it seems, even harassed by fellow Mandaeans in league with local Muslims, Yahia Bihram and other Mandaeans take refuge in the reed marshes. Returning to Basra alone, Yahia Bihram remains there a year. Later, family members appear to have joined him. Then, when his daughter dies, he despairs because the required four Mandaean bier-carriers cannot be found. At this point, he uses the traditional Mandaean expression in his agony: "my heart fell from its support."[24] He prays for his daughter, and then he leaves the town.[25]

Again he travels, now to Upper Mesopotamia, the Jezirah. Two priests of the Manduia clan[26] appear, Ṣagur and Šabuṭ, who take him to Margab, the Mandaean quarter of Suq eš-Šuyuk, where, a few years before, Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun had made themselves priests and taught *šganda*s.

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[20] Riza Alia Paša had captured the last of the Mamluks in Baghdad. On 12 October 1838, he burned Muhammerah, probably because it had emerged as too strong a commercial competitor to Basra. (I owe this information to Professor John E. Woods.)

[21] See Macuch's correction of Drower's translation in his review, 362.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 89.

[25] Macuch, review, 362.

[26] Ibid., 363.

Later, Yahia Bihram, at least, had to leave because of the laypeople's opposition (but he did return, as we have seen).

A year after Yahia Bihram has arrived in Margab, the local ruler inflicts a special form of persecution on the Mandaeans.

> The shaikh of the tribe, Thamir-ibn-Ghadban, circumcised all the Mandaeans that were on the lands of the tribe, women and men, boys and girls. There were a hundred souls, male and female, there. Then all the settlements where there were sons of Mars [i.e., Muslims] rose against them seeking to take us up out of the world. The Great Life quelled them. And those souls whom the tribe circumcised we took them in with us by baptism and marriage. For very fear not a person could go out on the roads, for if one did go out, they would circumcise him. For that reason we received them and took them in with us.[27]

To the Mandaeans, any form of bodily mutilation is a horror. Forced circumcision seems to have been a recurrent punishment meted out by hostile rulers, and the act marks a forced conversion. Strictly speaking, such a measure would "unmake" a Mandaean, but it is a sign of great pity and solidarity that the Mandaean community takes their violated kinsmen back as their own. By baptizing their mutilated fellow-religionists, the Mandaeans purify them in order to make them eligible for re-membership. Also, because the Mandaean population is so decimated after the cholera (ca. 1500 survivors, as Yahia Bihram told Petermann), they probably can ill afford to lose any more of their coreligionists, even those rendered impure by forced circumcision.

After recounting the Beduin sheikh's punishment, Yahia Bihram asks for blessings from the Lightworld on himself, on his father, and on his teacher, the latter being Ram[28] Zihrun,

> who consecrated me priest … and he gave life to the Root [i.e., to the Mandaeans] after the plague and was the ordainer of all kingliness (*i.e., the priesthood*) and the Root of the Great Life. He was with *yalufia* (*clerks, literates*) (*himself*) a perfect literate and an overseer that knoweth everything.[29]

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[27] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 90. The sheikh is one of the Muntafiqs.

[28] Misspelled "Sam" in Drower's translation, ibid.

[29] Ibid. Sh. Haithem emphasizes that after the cholera, Ram Zihrun held the highest Mandaean priestly office.

Ram Zihrun remains in the Khuzistan towns of Šuštar and Dezful, while Yahia Bihram stays in southern Babylonia, in Suq-eš-Šuyuk. He says of his close friend, relative, and initiator,

> For twelve years we have been divided and distant from one another, but the Great First Life and the Great-Presence-of-Glory informeth us about one another and crusheth our enemy. For He forsaketh us not, uniting us together![30]

Yahia Bihram obliquely refers to a robbery, perhaps different from the one he suffered in 1848 (AH 1265). Then he gives information about political events and lists a number of rulers. This section ends with the words, "And as yet no ruler is set in the realm of the Persians in Tehran."[31] Indeed, the years 1834–48 marked an interregnum in the rulership of the Qajar Shahs, with Naṣir al-Din taking power precisely in the year 1848.

The British exert a powerful rule in India, Yahia Bihram notes, and he describes their iron ships with propellers, for he has seen these ships on the Tigris. Marvelously, they make the trip from Basra to Baghdad in three days! Another new-fangled marvel is the mysterious airborne machines, probably hot-air balloons, which hover like living beings.[32]

DC 24: *ŠARH Ḏ-PARWANAIIA* AND *DC 47*: *A PHYLACTERY FOR RUE*

In a tiny script, Yahia Bihram copied *Šarh ḏ-Parwanaiia*, the scroll of priestly instruction for the intercalary five-day Panja (Parwaniia) ritual. He completed his task in 1832, in the house of his sister's son,[33] in Muhammerah. But the beginning of the work was done on the channel ʿAšar, which connects Basra with the waterway Šatt al-Arab.

Convinced that he is living at the very end of the last of the four world ages, when, according to Mandaean doctrine, things are as evil as they can be, Yahia Bihram keeps his faith. "Praised be Life and my king, Manda ḏ-Hiia, and Hibil, Šitil, and Anoš! May they keep us from the harsh sufferings at the end of the world, which are established by the last age!"[34] He continues, "There is no peace and no serenity. People are striking one another, blaming one another. (Our) support is the elevated King. Life be praised for ever and ever!"

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[30] Ibid., 90–91.

[31] Ibid., 91; See Macuch's correction, review, 363.

[32] Ibid., both references.

[33] If this is Bibia Mudalal, the son was probably the product of an earlier marriage, before she became the wife of Ram Zihrun. Bibia Mudalal may have been a widow.

He lists four leaders of the Mandaeans in Margab. The first is Burka, son of Sabtia, (baptismal name: Adam Yuhana, son of Hawa Mamania) of the families Durašia and Kupašia. Another one is Sarhan, son of Saʿad; the third is Parhan, son of Sbahiia, of the Durašia and Kupašia family clans; the fourth ʿAbid Saiid, son of Kairia, of the Kuhailia family. Yahia Bihram continues,

> Then (when) I and all the *yalufa*s who were there [i.e., in Margab], and sons of *tarmida*s, there was not yet anyone to teach us the Book of Souls, and the beautiful *rahma*s ("devotions") were not set in order.[35] But I did everything that was not defective, in the strength of the Great Life and the lofty King—I, Yahia Bihram. After the cholera there remained no *tarmida*s and *ganzibra*s. My father, R. Adam Yuhana, was a *ganzibra*, a chosen, good paragon, lofty in *naṣiruta*. When he lived he taught from the wisdom, and he loved it. … Then he went to the Breath of Life, and all the *tarmida*s and *ganzibra*s who went to the Breath of Life departed in that heavy cholera, also many people from those of darkness [i.e., Muslims] and from the Great Tribe of Life, until the town there had no people left.

Yahia Bihram then assures his readers that he changed nothing of what his father had taught him. In Margab, he found that no one knew the *rahma*s as he did. The *yalufa*s could not understand the liturgies and other texts very well, and the laypeople also sought his help. But when Yahia Bihram wanted to put in order the defective local baptismal liturgy and the *rahma*s, the laypeople stopped him. "They are confounded, because they live in the last age," he explains, sadly.

On the final day of Panja, Yahia Bihram prays the required liturgy in terror and agony because of the lack of correct ritual tools: he has neither the priestly staff, nor a new, silk priestly crown. "The *taga* ("crown") of cotton sufficed, one that I had consecrated before the cholera began," he explains. All alone, he says,

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[34] All quotations from *DC 24* are my own. Quotations from subsequent texts in this chapter are also mine.

[35] Note that he does not refer to Ram Zihrun. He may have left soon after the instructions of the others were concluded.

> I was frightened and worshipped in fear, with tremblings, and I shivered and my tears flowed without end. I prayed for compassion from Life, and I consecrated the crown, so that I might not be ruined. For the Life has pity in its compassion towards (its) sons and (knows) how much they are able to endure.

Reminiscing, Yahia Bihram recalls other, long-gone days, before the cholera, when he and his father bravely went together to Babil (probably Baghdad) to retrieve a *Ginza* that had been confiscated by the Muslims. "Our tongues were not stuck," he says, which I take to mean that the two Mandaean men were able to speak for themselves (or, perhaps, that they were eloquent). Whether they succeeded in regaining the book Yahia Bihram does not say.

At the very end of his postscript he states that it is now twenty years since he consolidated the *diwan*s and books. If he is referring to his own possible victory in arranging the books of the confused Mandaeans of Margab, the date of this part of the postscript must be the early 1850s. He ends with the formula, "Anyone whose soul is able: do not change![36] Establish the lofty *kušṭa*! May Life be victorious above all created things!"

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Drower bought *DC 47*, *Pišra d̠-Šambra* ("A Phylactery for Rue") in Baghdad in 1945. A year later, she published a translation of another copy of the same text,[37] but *DC 47* was copied by Yahia Bihram in 1833. As with the other DC texts from Yahia Bihram's hand—with the important exception of *MHZ*[38]—its colophon does not stretch back very far. But it includes two immediate successors to the copyist Yuhana Šitlan, who can be dated to 1480.[39] Yuhana Šitlan's generation seems to mark the end of *DC 47*'s colophon, for the last scribe is his contemporary, Yahia Mhatam.

Yahia Bihram copied *DC 47* from his father, Adam Yuhana, and he seems to have brought it with him, unstolen, on his many travels. He emphasizes that he saw no other scroll like it among the *tarmida*s in the places where he went. Despite the scroll's lack of a long pedigree, Yahia Bihram says that it "was not far from the receptacle [*kimṣa*] of Yuzaṭaq Manda d̠-Hiia" (Yuzaṭaq is a Light-World figure close to—or identified with—Manda d̠-Hiia).

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[36] Or: "do not convert!"

[37] E. S. Drower, "A Phylactery for Rue."

[38] I return to *MHZ* in chap. 13, which deals with the significance of the earliest colophons.

[39] For this copyist, see chap. 12.

Ceaselessly wandering during the time after the cholera, Yahia Bihram covers the district of the Persians, that of the people called the *laqaiia*,[40] the Arabs of Media, and the sons of Babil, he says. During these travels, he looks in vain for Mandaean leaders and well-ordered *Ginza*s.

"I prayed to the *ʿutra*s, my brothers, and I was unable to prevent the disgraces of what happened when I was alone by myself." Among other towering difficulties, it seems that he has been forced to leave behind his dead or dying father, without the proper rites, which would have caused him nearly unbearable pain. His mother, too, perished. With a few relatives, his older brother (probably Sam Šaiar) among them, Yahia Bihram stays in Basra, where an Arab judge comes to him, apparently in order to arrange the matter of the dead parents.

Yahia Bihram insists that he is writing his postscript so that surviving Mandaeans or those living at an even later time may know what happened as a result of the cholera. Voyaging down the Tigris from Baghdad to Basra together with another Mandaean, Yahia Bihram sees "foul matter of the Arabs" (perhaps corpses) floating in the river. In Basra the two Mandaeans observe New Year's, Dehwa Rabba d̠-Nauruz. Returning (to Baghdad?), Yahia Bihram initiates an unnamed young man of twenty into priesthood.

Later in the postscript he mentions the Englishmen Joseph Ayliffe and Consul Taylor, encountered in the *MHZ* postscript. And again, Yahia Bihram returns to his memories of the cholera. As people are dying all around him, he leaves Basra and, he says,

> went with all my strength to the marsh and supported myself and was saved from evil deeds. There remained none of all of our houses and (our) tribe, all except for my cousin and his wife, who is my dear sister and his wife.[41] So, I was in the marsh for a long time.

Finally, he arrives in the village of Nihirat.

Yahia Bihram mentions the same Mandaean leaders of Margab as he did in the postscript to *DC 24*. He speaks of another round of travels, including walking from Muhammerah (present-day Khorramshahr) to the southern Iraqi Nihirat. Here, he urges the Mandaeans to consolidate, to recreate their tribe, and to put their trust in Life. Oppressed by the seven, the twelve, and the five (i.e., the planets, the signs of the zodiac, and the five planets minus sun and moon), Yahia Bihram acknowledges that "there is nothing but persecution," but he steadfastly keeps his faith, and he ends on his usual note of "Life be victorious!"

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[40] Undetermined; see *MD*, 228a.

[41] Ram Zihrun and Yahia Bihram's sister Bibia Mudalal.

OTHER TEXTS

Twenty years later, in 1853—the year before Petermann arrives in Suq eš-Šuyuk—Yahia Bihram copies *DC 43*, entitled *The Poor Priest's Treasury*, a collection of twelve exorcisms. An Arabic talisman depicting a man with letters and numbers all over his body graces the back of the scroll. Inside it are several diagrams and drawings.[42]

Yahia Bihram copies *DC 43* for himself and for his children; he has two wives and offspring. They live in a precarious time, for the Mandaeans of Margab have just been raided, with loss of three Mandaean lives. "We fled and prayed and gathered together from the sons of the sword, from town to town, seeing nothing but persecution and starvation." With his two wives, two sons, three daughters, and a donkey, Yahia Bihram arrives in a village by a marsh, where his younger wife gives birth. His cousin, Ram Zihrun, "the child of my paternal uncle,"[43] joins the family. Ram Zihrun possesses the *qmaha* (probably *DC 43*) that Yahia Bihram copies. All of Yahia Bihram's own scrolls and books are lost, looted.

After writing the last of the twelve exorcisms contained in *The Poor Priest's Treasury*, Yahia Bihram elaborates on the present situation. The rulers responsible for the raid on Margab and for further persecution are the sons of Sad al-ʿAbas.[44] "May my Lord and Manda d̲-Hiia save us from the sons of Krun!" he implores.[45] Then he asks Hibil Ziwa for rescue into the Lightworld—that is, for death—which shows the depth of his desperation. "We endured robbery, murder, persecution, starvation, and disaster from them, in lower Mesopotamia … they broke apart the channels." Those who were able fled into the desert, suffering under the shadeless sun. Yahia Bihram himself, along with some others, crossed over a waterway on a raft made of bitumen. "Life was with us and saved us and delivered us into the marsh." Kinsmen appeared, including one of Yahia Bihram's cousins, named Šaria.

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[42] "Very curious," Drower remarks regarding the still unpublished 43, in her typewritten list of DC texts.

[43] This is precise: in April 1996, the Mandaeans of Ahwaz in Iran gave me the same information.

[44] Not identifiable at present.

[45] Krun is the great mountain of flesh, the king of the lowest of the underworlds.

Many place names that I cannot identify show up in this postscript. 1853, the year of such utter misery for the Mandaeans in Margab,[46] falls within the reign of the Ottoman ruler ʿAbdülmecid I (r. 1839–1861), whose local representatives may be held responsible for the persecutions.

* * *

Yahia Bihram makes no mention of the scholar Heinrich Petermann, and the year 1854 is absent from his chronicles. But in 1855, Ram Zihrun and Yahia Bihram, now rejoined, together copy *DC 28*: *Pišra d̠-Bit Mišqal Ainia* (The Exorcism of 'I sought to lift my eyes').[47] The two men, who may have linked up in Amara, are working from a copy made by Yahia Bihram's father, Adam Yuhana. Ram Zihrun also consults a copy stemming from the *ganzibra* Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, of the Sabur family, "who is not a hireling in the world," specifies Ram Zihrun. This I take to mean that the late *ganzibra* had been an upstanding, incorruptible man.[48] In the early part of the nineteenth century, he had been a *ganzibra* in Qurna but was forced into exile from there.[49]

Ram Zihrun is a different kind of scribe from his brother-in-law.[50] He gives no long autobiographical postscripts, no descriptions of the cholera aftermath or of persecutions. Perhaps he is more prone to looking forward than back into the past. But at the end of *DC 28* something specific is on his mind: the topic of intermarriage. Ram Zihrun warns against this practice, for a case has just occurred in his community: a Mandaean married a Muslim. "Guard the descendants!" Ram Zihrun admonishes. At the very end he addresses himself to the brothers who will succeed him and Yahia Bihram, to "anyone who sees our book."

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[46] In 1854, they fled Margab after the murder of the slave, as we saw in chap. 6 below.

[47] The title is a reference to a *CP* prayer, *CP* 35. The scroll is not published.

[48] In 1843, Ram Zihrun copied *DC 7*, *Diwan Nahrawata*, and the *ganzibra* Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, was a copyist of this text, too.

[49] This information comes from Yahia Ram Zihrun, the copyist of *Dmut Kušṭa*.

[50] Though no less busy. In addition to the *Ginza DC 22* (treated in chap. 3), he copied the Australian *Ginza* in 1843, *The Book of the Zodiac* (*DC 31*), *The Scroll of the Archer* (*DC 38*), *The Marriage of the Great Šišlam* (*DC 39*), and the *Diwan Nahrawata* ("Diwan of the Rivers") (*DC 7*). Ram Zihrun is also listed as a scribe in many other texts.

* * *

The Exorcism of the Great Overthrower, *DC 37*, bought by Drower from Sheikh Negm in 1939, also comes from the hand of Yahia Bihram.[51] The scroll contains strange diagrams and "graphics." Its date is 1861, and Yahia Bihram is copying it from one that he already owns. There is none of the usual postscript, but the scribe includes a lineage of sultans, and he says that in the year of copying, "ʿAbdul ʿAziz took his kingship in ʿStambul."[52]

* * *

As far as I know, the last of Yahia Bihram's copied texts is *The Scroll of the Great Baptism*, the unpublished *DC 50*, which he wrote in 1867 (Yahia Bihram was probably born around 1800).[53] The text treats the purification ritual for a polluted priest, which consists of 360 baptisms. Yahia Bihram works from a manuscript by Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Mhatam (clans Sabur and Baṭahaiia), who also owned the copy of *The Book of the Zodiac* (*DC 31*) from which Ram Zihrun copied in 1831. A *tarmida* who may have died in the *muṭana* (if he had not already departed earthly life before the epidemic), Yahia Ram Zihrun is an interesting copyist in his own right. He transcribed at least four manuscripts between 1815 and 1823, among them the marvelous *Dmut Kušṭa*.

Yahia Bihram repeats some of the information given in previous postscripts. When he admonishes, "O my good brothers! Let it not be shed, the fruit that you bear, of your own!" I take his words to imply a warning against mixed marriages, a worry strongly expressed also in *DC 28*, which Ram Zihrun and Yahia Bihram copied together. Yahia Bihram again recalls the cholera and states that in those days, before he met up with Ram Zihrun, he "was all alone. I prayed the *rahma*s of the three daily prayer times without a crown and without anything." Ram Zihrun, on the other hand, possesses some ritual implements. (We have already witnessed, in *DC 24*, Yahia Bihram's agony about his lack of a new silk crown).

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[51] This belongs among the texts causing the fervent correspondence between Sheikh Negm and Drower in late 1939 (see chap. 5). The scroll remains unpublished.

[52] Correct: this Ottoman rulership covers the years 1861–1876.

[53] For the problems regarding the full life span of Yahia Bihram, see chap. 4 above.

For the Panja festival, the priests build a *mandi* and consecrate it. In this context, Yahia Bihram specifies that Ram Zihrun "knew *rahma*s other than mine, because he was a son of a *ganzibra*."[54] I take this to mean that, unlike Yahia Bihram, Ram Zihrun knew the prayer cycle for the cult hut consecration. Joined with the lay-people, the new priests baptized one another and also consecrated as priest one of the laymen who had not been a *yalufa*. They even celebrated a marriage ceremony.[55]

So, on the fifth day of Panja the new priests performed the prayers "with the crown that I had made from cotton, with prayers of incense and sandalwood, with the name insertions (*zhara*s) of Parwanaiia. I prayed for myself." It is important to Yahia Bihram to let his readers know that the priests did their utmost to perform the ritual correctly, and that they included the stultifying—and now doubtless greatly increased—number of names of departed Mandaeans, a required feature on that ritual occasion.[56]

Yahia Bihram finishes, "My Lord above all worlds! Behold and discern! And accept our spirits and souls; and may we be saved and rise up to the beginning!" Faithful until the end, Yahia Bihram shows no hint of self-aggrandizing or loss of humility. He has survived many horrors inflicted by the seven and the twelve, and he remains unwavering in his acceptance of the Lightworld testing its children.

◆

Taking a clue from the post-cholera presence of Yahia Bihram's sister Bibia Mudalal, I now move to a chapter on women priests in Mandaeism. This is a highly charged theme, fraught with contradicting scholarly opinions. But the many women's names in the Mandaean colophons demand that we take them seriously and try to ascertain their status.

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[54] But so was Yahia Bihram.

[55] This may be at the end of the period of instructing new leaders (see above), for these events may have taken place during Panja in 1832.

[56] For the *masiqta*s recited at Parwanaiia, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 8.

8 WOMEN PRIESTS

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In the *Book of John* (*JB*), one finds the intriguing tradition of Miriai, mother of Jesus, as a Mandaean female community-consolidating figure who rescues the Mandaeans from persecution in Jerusalem and becomes the focal point for the community in the East.[1] In *JB*'s main story of Miriai,[2] she is portrayed as a majestic leader of the people, even in a priestly role. Traditionally, the tenor of this story has been taken to be legendary and mythological. It is exceedingly difficult to discern what sort of historical kernel lies hidden behind the Miriai stories.[3]

In comparison with the Miriai traditions, the women's names in Mandaean colophons and in the great commemoration prayer for the dead, *CP* 170,[4] "Our Ancestors" (*Abahatan*), do furnish us with substantial historical material. It could well be that the oldest Mandaeism preserves a tradition of female leaders. What role this might have played in the earliest Mandaean history (especially in its relationship to Judaism and Christianity), we are not yet in a position to know.

How to evaluate the women's names occurring among the thousands of male ones in Mandaean colophons? Women are copyists, book-owners, library-owners, editors, and beneficiaries of copied manuscripts. As copyists and editors, the women can, in many cases, be reckoned as priests. Women book-owners may be priests, but sometimes they are not. Women identified solely as beneficiaries cannot be counted as priests, unless additional evidence exists. The basis for my reasoning is: if the women are not designated by *maṣbuta* names, such women are priests, "daughters of men." Whether a woman can be initiated into priesthood by a woman is, so far, an unsettled question. So far, I have seen *one* possible instance of this. In treating the colophon evidence, I pay attention to the precise textual expressions in order to determine a woman's status. I also try to place the women priests in their respective time periods.

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter was published as "The Evidence for Women Priests."

[2] See my *Mandaeans*, chap. 5. This chapter also appears as "A Mandaean Appropriation of Jesus' Mother Miriai."

[3] Still, see chap. 11 below on *JB*, and my "Re-Investigation of *The Book of John*."

[4] References to the more than four hundred prayers in *CP* are given by their numbers, as given in Drower's *Canonical Prayerbook*. Page numbers to the book may also be used, but mainly in conjunction with reference to the prayers.

As noted in the Introduction, the use of different types of names places Mandaeans in specific relationships. *Maṣbuta* names are the rule in religious formulas, for example, and in designating a person in the role of beneficiary (i.e., the person as client, who pays a priest to have a ritual performed or a text transcribed for individual salvific purposes). Baptismal names always refer to the person's mother, and such names do not usually identify persons in priest lineages. Initiation-relationships are overwhelmingly given in relation to a man—mainly by the formula "son of." The formula "daughter of" also exists in colophons (and elsewhere). In a colophon this expression means that the woman can be designated in relationship to her initiator. Because male names predominate, a woman, when she turns up in a colophon, may be linked—wrongly—to a verb in the masculine form. Or, a woman copyist may be referred to as "he," simply because the pervasive pattern is so male.

Priest-families own books; laypeople often do not (at least not traditionally). Priestly office tends to run in families, but this is not strictly necessary. A novice may be initiated by a person other than his father (we have seen examples of this already), perhaps an uncle, even a brother, and sometimes by a person in a different clan. The designation of an initiate as "son of" specifies a father–son relationship in an initiation; likewise, "daughter of" expresses a woman priest's relationship to her initiator. Often, the biological and the initiation relationship are identical with respect to men. Like men, women may be elevated to office by their biological fathers.

My investigation into women's names in the Mandaean priest traditions begins with a noncolophonic source—which in the context of colophon research turns out to be a magnificent historical fount. This is the commemoration prayer for the dead *CP* 170.[5] The first part of the current chapter deals with women's names in *CP* 170, in *CP*'s colophons, in other Mandaean liturgies, and in *JB*. Then follow women's names in the *Ginza*s, and a third section deals with other evidence. At the end, I provide a list of the women priests, with an attempt to place them historically, however approximately, and I also specify in which texts the women are found. Unless specifically stated, this list does not include names of women who have been categorized as beneficiaries of text copying, as book-owners, or solely as scribes. Either (1) All of those women were not priests, or (2), there is not enough evidence to show that they might have held priestly office.

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[5] The names in his prayer are treated in chap. 10 below.

WOMEN'S NAMES IN *CP* 170, IN *CP* COLOPHONS, IN OTHER LITURGIES, AND IN *JB*

CP 170 asks forgiveness of sins for a long list of named, status-categorized Mandaeans (and even for Lightworld beings). In the roster of *ganzibra*s, there are two women: Hawa, daughter of ʿDaiia, and Anhar Kumraita, daughter of Simat. The two appear in sequence, right after the phrase "Ram Sindan and Šaria, forgiveness of sins be there for them."[6] Because the context is liturgical, all names in *CP* 170 are *maṣbuta* names—that is, they do not show initiation relationships. The two *ganzibra*s Hawa and Anhar Kumraita have as their immediate successor in the roster the *ganzibra* Yahia Ramuia, son of Ramuia. Ramuia can be dated, with precision, to the year 638 CE.[7] On the basis of where the two female *ganzibra*s are placed in the list, it seems plausible to date them around 700. Aside from their mention in this prayer, the women appear in other versions of *Abahatan*.[8]

In a class by herself is the sole woman ethnarch: Haiuna, daughter of Tihwia and Yahia (note that *both* parents' names are given). She is listed among the ethnarchs in *CP* 170 (and in other versions of this prayer).[9] Few other female scribes turn up as consistently as she does: in *MHZ*, *ATŠ*, *CP*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, *ARZ*, and *Marsh. 691*.[10] Presiding over her scribal center in the southeastern Iraqi town of Ṭib together with her son—who is also an ethnarch, Bainai, son of Zakia—Haiuna is a Mandaean female leader of singular position. Nowhere, so far, have I found her firmly in the role of initiator.

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[6] *CP* 170; Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 153. The text appears to be corrupt: in the facsimile, p. 199e, the phrase is written above the line. And "Šaria" may be an error for "Šadia."

[7] Chap. 9 below on the Mandaean liturgies deals with Ramuia.

[8] See chap. 10 below.

[9] Again, see chap. 10 below.

[10] A manuscript containing some of the liturgies.

At times, a scribe may indicate Haiuna as "son," an error that, in Haiuna's case, appears only rarely in Mandaean colophons.[11] But it is an understandable mistake, for a male scribe is of course so used to writing "son of" when naming most copyists that he tends to forget himself when a woman's name appears. Scribes cannot change the gender of a name in an attempt to suppress the presence of women copyists and priests. But there are instances of omitting women's names in colophons, as we have seen (and will see again).

CP, containing over four hundred prayers, has eight colophons. This shows that the liturgical segments making up this conglomerate originally were (and, to some extent, still are considered to be) separate units.[12] When Adam Yuhana copied *CP* in 1802, in Huwaiza, he states that he copied the first two parts of it by using a book (*sidra*) that belonged to his own paternal grandmother. On her, he heaps the not uncommon praises due a "pure cloud," a regular designation for a Mandaean woman of honorable reputation. According to Adam Yuhana, his grandmother is of a pure mind, devout, and without fornication or adultery.[13] Her *maṣbuta* name is Anhar, daughter of Šarat; her given name being ʿDiia, daughter of Adam, son of Saʿad, of the clan Šuiria. Neither she nor her father has priest lineages; both of them are identified according to their *maṣbuta* names. Anhar copied the book from a scribe often encountered in *CP* (and also attested in *Šarh d-Qabin*): Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun. One may assume that Adam Yuhana's grandmother is no longer alive at the time of his copying *CP*, twenty years after Adam Yuhana's first attested copied text, *Pašar Haršia*, which dates to 1782.

Colophon 1 of *CP* names other women who are clearly copyists and/or book-owners. The first is Šaha, daughter of ʿAziz Sakma, family name Wašia, who can be dated to the mid seventeenth century. Šaha's baptismal name is Hawa Mamania, but her mother's name is lacking. Šaha copied her book from the ubiquitous copyist Bihram BrHiia (the elder), of the Kuhailia clan. There is not enough evidence to designate Šaha as a priest.

Belonging probably sometime in the sixteenth century, the woman priest and copyist named Mariuaria, daughter of Adam Šapur, son of Yahia Šapur, is at work. She and the well-known copyist Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, Buhaiir, copy one another's books. Another Yuhana Šitlan, who was alive in the year 1480,[14] cannot be used to place Mariuaria historically. She is designated in relationship to her father only, which indicates her priest status. In *DC 42*'s list of *ganzibra*s, Mariuaria's son Adam Zakia is mentioned. I assume this connection between mother and son because Mariuaria's name is highly unusual in texts I have seen so far.

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[11] For instance, this occurs in *MHZ*, Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 44.

[12] *CP* is treated in chap. 9 below.

[13] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, facsimile p. 120.

Mariuaria occurs also in de Morgan's "Book of Souls" colophon (a colophon that follows that of *CP*). It may be possible to argue that she is the woman for whom *DC 37*, "The Exorcism of the Great Overthrower,"[15] was originally written. This exorcism has only three copyist lineages, and the phrase regarding Mariuaria identifies Bihram BrHiia (the elder) as copying from "a *šapta*, from an original manuscript (*ṭupsa*)[16] of a *qmaha* that was written for a pure cloud, Mariuaria, daughter of Šadia Yasmin." Notice that here, in a liturgical and beneficiary context, we have Mariuaria's baptismal name! And, as in *CP*, we see a scribal relationship between Mariuaria and Bihram BrHiia, the elder. The document ends with the information that the *qmaha* was found in a book belonging to a man named Adam, son of Hawa (another baptismal name). Perhaps *DC 37* originated with Adam, who may be Mariuaria's father, for according to *CP* 1's colophon, his full name is Adam Šapur. This is the name of Mariuaria's father/initiator, as we have seen. If this reasoning is correct, we have a rare instance of a woman who is clearly intiated by her biological father.

To return to *CP*: a woman, Šadia, owns a scroll that the famous scribe Brik Manda[17] used, according to *CP*'s colophon 1. Unfortunately, the neighboring section of the text is marred by corruptions. We are dealing with early Islamic times, a bit later than the time when the scribe Nukraia, son of Šitil, makes use of no fewer than seven copies of the baptismal liturgy, "The Book of Souls," in order to produce a reliable copy of his own.[18] After Šadia comes a man named Harmuzdukt, a name listed among the male *maṣbuta* names in *Sfar M.*[19] Dukt—the last part of Harmuzdukt's name—means "daughter" in Persian. In the same part of *CP*'s colophon 1 in which we find Šadia and Harmuzdukt, Dukt appears in the context "Šabur, son of Dukt." He comes from the land of "Mašian [Mesene], which is in the land of Burka" (the latter may refer to a bend in a river).[20]

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[14] See chap. 12 below.

[15] See chap. 7 above. *DC 37* remains unpublished; in 1861, it was transcribed by our old friend Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana. *MD*, 249b, s.v. *mahsipan* ("overthrower"), has a wrong reference: it should be to this text, *DC 37*, not to *DC 43*.

[16] For this technical term, see *MD*, 178a.

[17] No initiator's or baptismal name appears.

[18] See chap. 9 below.

[19] Listed as "Hurmizdukt" ("daughter of Ohrmazd"); see Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 68.

Among the seven manuscripts that Nukraia examines, the sixth was owned by Faruk, son of Marspindu Abuzdaqad. Significantly, Faruk is listed as Marspindu's initiate. Her full name, with surname/clan name, is given, which is highly unusual. Neither Faruk nor Marspindu is attested in other colophons, and neither of them is a *maṣbuta* name. The time period is that of one of the most famous women priests: the ethnarch Haiuna.

Turning to colophons 2 and 3 in *CP*, we find that both have a clustering of women datable to the early part of the eighteenth century. The first one is Mudalal, daughter of Dihdar Salim, son of Dihdar Ganim, of the Quṭana clan. A copyist, book-owner, and priest, Mudalal works from a copy by the craftsman ʿAziz, son of craftsman Faruk. Priestly names for these two, ʿAziz and his father Faruk, are attested in other colophons as Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans. The next copyist link is Šaha, the woman scribe found in colophon 1, who was probably a priest. (In colophon 3 of *CP*, Šaha shows up again, but here she is anonymous, her name hidden). Another woman, who belongs to the same time period (early 18th century) and who appears only in colophon 3, is Kiria, daughter of Salim, son of Ganim, Quṭana. She and Mudalal have the same initiator (they may be sisters!), and both women appear in the traditional priest lineage format.

Two women priests appear close together as copyists in colophon 2: Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Zakia, of the Diqnana[21] clan, and Hawa Mahnuš, daughter of Yahia. Hawa is also in the third *CP* colophon. I count eight copyist links between the early eighteenth century Šahah (i.e., Šaha—the spelling varies) and Šarat Yasmin. Tentatively, I put Šarat Yasmin and Hawa Mahnuš in the mid fifteenth century.

The section of *CP*'s colophon 2 involving the two women reads as follows:

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[20] Again, see chap. 9 below. Today, the area of Amara and its surroundings is called "Misan." Indeed, the Tigris makes a bend here.

[21] The name Diqnana will strike the reader as familiar from the *Ginza* colophons: recall Sam Bihram, Diqnana, "Laiit." The women here in *CP*'s roster in colophon 2 live in the same time period, it seems. This is the era of the confluence of *Ginza* scribes, where the separate scribal "river branches" have diverged from a common stream, stretching back to ca. 200 CE, in the case of *GL*.

> Bihram, son of Adam Zarzuia, from the book (*sidra*) of a pure cloud—who is his mother, Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Zakia Diqnana—(the book) that he [i.e., Bihram, son of Adam Zarzuia] copied again, from a book that Hawa Mahnuš, daughter of Yahia, copied (from) our teacher, who is a *ganzibra*: Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, Zarzuia.[22]

So, Bihram, son of Adam Zarzuia, twice copied the book containing *CP* 75–77, in both instances using volumes belonging to women, one of them being his own mother. Both the Kuhailias and the Zarzuias, apparently having no objections to women priests in this period, may have been "liberal" clans in this time period.

Precisely the same phrasing as in this *CP* colophon 2 extract appears in a prayerbook copied in by Lamea Abbas Amara's uncle, Sh. Dakhil, in 1921.[23] The prayers are *ʿniana*s and *maṣbuta* and *masiqta* liturgies, and the colophon lists four women copyists. Two of them are, as noted, the priests Šarat Yasmin and Hawa. The two others are book-owners, but not priests: Hawa Mamania, daughter of Šarat Simat; and Mamania, daughter of Hawa Mamania. Scribal neighbors, these last-mentioned women lived around the year 1800, but maybe earlier.

CP's colophon 2 ends with the ethnarch Haiuna, the only woman copyist in *CP*'s colophons 3, 4, 7, and 8.[24] Regarding the end of colophon 3, it ends with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.[25] ʿQaiam is attested very often, and he belongs to the early ninth century. A great-grandson of Zindana, Ram Zihrun Bihdad, appears as a scribe in *CP*'s colophon 3, and he uses a scroll owned by ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.

Early scribal luminaries such as Ramuia, Šganda, and Zazai of Gawazta are often referred to in relationship to both parents. Still, these ethnarchs seem to be initiated by men, and what may look like added *maṣbuta* designations may simply imply a kind of double namings.[26] Another ʿQaiam—not a son of Zindana but of Šarat— appears early in the postscript to *CP*'s first colophon, occurs nowhere else, and is only referred to by his matronym. He shows up three lineages earlier than Ramuia. ʿQaiam may be assigned to the sixth century. He appears in the following context:

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[22] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, facsimile p. 121.

[23] See chap. 3 above.

[24] Again, for the *CP* colophons, see chap. 9 below. The prayers covered by the last two colophons are identical to prayers found in earlier parts of *CP*.

[25] Note that Zindana is listed, but as "Zandana," among the male baptismal names in Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 69, while *MD*, 160a and 167a, says that it is a woman's name. I trust *Sfar. M.*

[26] But if this turns out *not* to be the case, we must revise our picture of male dominance in early Mandaean priest initiations.

> Anuš Alaha copied from the *diwan* of ʿQaiam, son of Šarat, and ʿQaiam copied from Qai(u)ma, son of Brik-Alaha, and Qaiuma copied from Šganda son of Yasmin.[27]

In this list only the middle scribe, Qaiuma, appears in relation to a male.

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Next, searching for women mentioned in the *JB* colophons,[28] we find Mhatam Zihrun, Kuhailia, son of Yahia BrHiia. He is a *ganzibra* copyist attested in a great number of texts: *Marsh 691*, *CP*, *JB*, *ATŠ*, *ARZ*, and de Morgan's "Book of Souls." His wife, the priest Yasmin Mudalal, daughter of Adam Bihram, of the clan Zarzuia, appears as copyist of at least four *JB* manuscripts. One can date Yasmin Mudalal to the early sixteenth century. Her father is identical to the copyist mentioned above, (Adam) Bihram, son of Adam Zarzuia,[29] who copied from his own mother Šarat Yasmin's text, according to *CP*'s colophon 2, as we have seen. So, we find a woman priest (Šarat Yasmin) and her granddaughter Yasmin Mudalal, also a priest, and a male copyist whose mother and daughter are priests and copyists. This suggests a family tradition. The husband of Yasmin Mudalal—the well-known *ganzibra* Mhatam Zihrun—likewise obviously had no objections to women priests. When Mhatam Zihrun copied *Ms. A* of *JB*, he used the book belonging to "his pure spouse."[30] She may have brought this book with her from her father's house as part of her dowry.

When Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, in 1752 copied *DC 30*, a *JB* manuscript bought by Drower in 1937, he transcribed the text for the benefit of a pious woman named Mamania, daughter of the craftsman Maqsud. According to my criteria, she is a not a priest. In *DC 30* we also discover Yasmin Mudalal and the oft-met copyist Mamul Dihgan, daughter of the craftsman Bihram, Sabur (ca. 1700). At an earlier stage in my research, I hesitated, on the basis of this colophon, over considering Mamul Dihgan a priest. But in view of other evidence, I now give her priestly status.[31] In the British Library's *Ginza* Add. 23,599, the colophon to *GL* ended abruptly with the name "Mamul." The colophon was obviously cut off (as we saw in chapter 4).

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[27] I have changed the text slightly: compare Drower, *Canonical Prayer-book*, 71.

[28] For details about the *JB* colophons, see chap. 11 below.

[29] The name is slightly garbled, but in a manner consistent with other compressions of names in Mandaean colophons.

[30] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 282.

Two nameless non-priest mothers are mentioned in three different *JB* manuscripts. One of the women is in *Hunt. 71*. She appears two generations earlier than Yasmin Mudalal. Yasmin Mudalal's book was copied from one owned by Yahia, son of Bihram, Gadana, and Yahia had made his copy on the basis of one owned by his mother. The second woman, too, is indicated only as a mother. She turns up in two other *JB* manuscripts, a couple of generations before Yasmin Mudalal. This anonymous woman, a *draša* owner, seems to be the mother of Baktiar Tilidia; mother and son appear to be co-owners of the text.[32]

In Mr. Sobbi's *JB*, copied by Mhatam,[33] a biological son of Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, in 1910, quite a few women turn up. Mhatam copied the book for his biological sister, Mahnuš, daughter of Šarat (given name: Hašumah, daughter of Yahia Bihram), who is neither a priest nor expressly a book-owner (until this volume is transcribed for her).

Then, there is an unnamed woman, a beneficiary and seemingly a copyist but not a priest. In this context, we see that Yahia Yuhana,[34] son of Adam Zihrun, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans, copied *JB* for his second sister. He copied from the book of the priest who did *Dmut Kušṭa* (and other texts), Yahia Ram Zihrun, in 1818.

A book-owner, Miriah (= Mamania, daughter of Mamania), occurs in this *JB* colophon, and a second priest named Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun—but of the Manduias (not the Dihdaria and Šabur clans)—copied from her book. The verbs are reversed in the text, so that "she copied" is attached to Yahia Yuhana, and vice versa. Miriah's scribal successor and predecessor are both from the Manduia family, but her own are Mahpud and ʿKuma. Her secular lineage shows that she is not a priest. She copied *JB* from Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun, Manduia and ʿKuma, who, in turn, transcribed the text for the benefit of his own mother: Šamiat, daughter of Yahia Bayan, of the Manduia and ʿKuma families. And Šamiat is clearly a priest, but not a copyist here. Her *maṣbuta* name is given as Hawa Simat, daughter of Anhar. If her son Ram Yuhana was indeed initiated by his own father, we may conclude that Šamiat's husband was Yahia Zihrun. The clan names are, as we see, identical.

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[31] We have found Mamul Dihgan also in connection with the *Ginza*.

[32] See Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 282, 289 (the two references show inconsistencies).

[33] I have not found Mhatam elsewhere.

[34] He is the uncle of the cholera survivor Yahia Bihram.

In her customary scribal slot, we then find Yasmin Mudalal, daughter of Adam Bihram, Zarzuia. Mhatam Zihrun, her husband, copied from her book, but this colophon does not state their relationship; it merely says, "He copied from the *draša* of a pure cloud."

I now leave Mr. Sobbi's *JB* and turn, very briefly, to a few other copies of *JB*. One is transcribed by the present-day Iranian *yalufa* Sh. Choheili.[35] The colophon in this *JB* shows overlaps with that of Lamea's book, and there are a couple of women beneficiaries. In another *JB*, *Hunt. 71*, we again find Yasmin Mudalal, and the nameless mother of Yahia. Baktiar Tilidia's anonymous mother is absent in *Hunt. 71*. Still, one may ask: Why do we find two nameless mothers as *JB* copyists and book-owners in this time period, adjacent to the priest Yasmin Mudalal? Is this sheer coincidence, or abbreviations in the text, or is there a conscious effort to conceal the women's identities?

In Lamea Abbas Amara's *JB* (from 1922), there is an otherwise unattested woman priest, Qinta,[36] daughter of Zihrun Adam. She is slightly younger than Mhatam Zihrun, Yasmin Mudalal's husband, the man who was initiated by BrHiia (abbreviation for Bihram BrHiia, the elder). Qinta is the aunt of Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun Adam, Dihdaria, and he copied for her benefit. Was Qinta initiated by her own brother? The text seems corrupt, for Yahia Yuhana is said to have copied for "the son of the brother of his mother" (i.e., his maternal cousin), who is Yahia Dihdar, son of Adam Šitlan, Buhaiir. But if he already copied the text for Qinta, this does not make sense. It would be good if we could find another attestation for Qinta.

WOMEN IN THE *GINZA* COLOPHONS

No woman copyist appears in the first of the seven colophons of the four Paris *Ginza* manuscripts. *GL*'s colophons have, as we have seen, (father of) Šlama, daughter of Qidra, thereby obscuring Šlama as the most ancient named Mandaean copyist. As noted, she goes beyond the time of Zazai of

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[35] For him, see my *Mandaeans*, chap 6. The copy date of Sh. Choheili's *JB* is inconclusive.

[36] Qinta is the name of one of John the Baptist's two wives (the other one is named Anhar).

Gawazta. No *GL* colophons list Lightworld beings as copyists, in contrast to the claims made in Zazai's case, for his Lightworld scribal predecessors are often Manda d-Hiia and the First Life.

Another early female copyist in *GL*'s list is Miriai, daugter of Simat, probably named for the Mandaean ancestral heroine Miriai, mother of Jesus. One might be tempted to see a priest lineage relationship here, but I tend to doubt it, mainly because Simat is a *maṣbuta* name, while Miriai is not. But the question remains: How far back in time do *maṣbuta* names appear? Are such names an original and basic feature in earliest Mandaeism?

In *Hunt. 6*, Miriai shows up without parental/initiator designation. As copyist, Miriai is the immediate predecessor to ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, and *he* copies from a *šapta* owned by Miriai. She in turn copied from Sam, son of Sakara, son of Zakia, who again copied from Ruzba, son of Hawa. Either we have a male scribe with a female initiator at this early stage, or Ruzba's *maṣbuta* name is present. Perhaps erring on the conservative side, I think that the latter is the case.

Turning to another time period, the 1700s (the exact date is erased), we find that Yahia Bihram, son of Adam,[37] copied Paris *Ginza Ms. D*. He worked from a book owned by Badriiah, a "pure cloud." Her lineage is long, and it consists entirely of secular names. A new female priest is Hawa, daughter of Yuhana (alternatively: "Yahia") Zakia, and this woman is consistently listed as editor of the scrolls included in colophons 4, 5, and 6 in many *Ginza*s (*GR* only), including all the Paris ones. The verb "she assembled" testifies to her editorial abilities. No other Mandaean scribe, whether male or female, is characterized as editor as consistently as Hawa. The frequently met copyist Bayan, son of Adam Šupartaiia, uses her copies.[38] In colophon 3 of Paris *Ms. C* it seems that she transcribes the text for her brother, Yuhana Dihdar, son of Anuš Muʿalia.[39]

The last named copyist of colophons 5 and 6 is Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan. In several of the sixth colophons of the *Ginza* an odd circumlocution occurs: "the father of the daughter of Yahia Sam, son of Sarwan." Here is a woman copyist, and we know, thanks to colophon 6 in the Australian *Ginza*, that her name is Hawa. This text states outright, "Hawa, who is the pupil of Yahia, son of Yuhana, son of Sarwan."[40] Hawa's immediate copying successor is the woman priest Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, son of Anuš, son of Bihram Šitil. Šadia Mamania is attested in several *Ginza*s.

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[37] But we can date Yahia Bihram now, thanks to the British Library's *Ginza* Ms. Add. 23,600: 1735–36.

[38] In *Hunt. 6*, another lineage intervenes between Hawa and Bayan.

[39] The text seems corrupt here, however, as this is one of the instances in which the verb "assembled," usually employed about Hawa, is used in masculine form.

In addition to the above-mentioned Hawa, a namesake occurs: Hawa, daughter of Nukraia, a *Ginza* copyist and a priest. She is the third-to-last copyist of *GR* 15 and as a scribal neighbor of the famous Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, she therefore belongs to early Islamic times. This colophon ends with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Paris *Mss. C* and *D* say that the scribe Zakia, who is without a named initiator, uses Hawa's copy.

DC 22, the well-preserved *Ginza* copied in 1831 by the cholera survivor Ram Zihrun, son of Bihram Sam, testifies to other women. Ram Zihrun transcribes this *Ginza* for Anhar, daughter of Šarat Simat and Dihdar Karam. Her given name is Zaʿripa; she gives plentiful offerings for the scribe's task, according to Ram Yuhana's statement in his introductory remarks to his *GL* colophon.

Mamul Dihgan, whom we have seen earlier, is "a pure cloud, pious and straight, who stretched out her hand for *tarmida*s and *ganzibra*s." Attested as scribe in several *Ginza*s and in *DC 30* (*JB*), Mamul is the last one in the abruptly ending—obviously cut off— *GL* colophon in the British Library's *Ginza* Add. 23,599. Mamul Dihgan's direct predecessor is the scribe and priest Yasmin Bana, "daughter of a father of *ganzibra*s, Yahia Bihram." The California *Ginza* states that Yasmin Bana owns one of the copies used by Mamul Dihgan to transcribe that *Ginza*. Yasmin Bana appears in colophon 3 there, and in the second colophon of *DC 22*. She belongs in a long, illustrious lineage of priests. Her father/initiator Yahia Bihram, is a scribe of *ATŠ*, *CP*, and *Marsh. 691*. Both belong to the seventeenth century or so.

In his second colophon, Ram Zihrun says that his own father, Bihram Sam—on whose *Ginza* copy Ram Zihrun relies— transcribed the text for a woman, Hida Harbuiah, daughter of Mahnuš and ʿArdabara. She carries the nickname Kašla, "jewel." However, in the next two colophons, and in his *GL* colophon, Ram Zihrun reveals that his father copied for the benefit of Mamania, daughter of Hawa Mamania, and of *ʿustad* Šabarah. Neither of these two female beneficiaries is a priest.

But somewhat earlier in the scribal lineage comes a woman book-owner by the name of Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam. She may be dated around 1700 and she appears in nearly all of *DC 22*'s colophons. Her namesake, the much earlier Hawa, daughter of Yahia Zakia—the woman scribe met before and consistently called "gatherer," that is, editor—appears in *DC 22*'s colophon 4 as she does in all *Ginza*s. The previously encountered Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil, also shows up as scribe in her usual spot in colophon 6. The women scribes toward the end of *DC 22*'s *GL* colophon consistently follow other *GL* patterns.

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[40] Despite the inconsistencies, this is the same lineage.

In the British Library, the *Ginza* Add. 23,599 attests to a woman scribe and priest who is so far unknown elsewhere. Her name is Simat, daughter of Adam Yuhana, of the Zakia and Buhaiir families. Perhaps one generation younger than Yasmin Bana, Simat copies from Yasmin Bana's *Ginza*. Both women are of the Buhaiir and Zakia clans, but their lineages do not overlap. Simat belongs around 1700. The priest who used her copy was Yahia Bihram, son of Adam,[41] Manduia and ʿKuma, who was active as a scribe in 1735–36.

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Women's names appear in colophons of the *Ginza*s that I have consulted in the United States. In Lamea Abbas Amara's *Ginza* from 1886, written by her grandfather's brother, Sheikh Idan, there is a conspicuous spreading of blessings. This is so because the scribe writes the various parts of the *Ginza* for the benefit of different people, several women among them. None of these beneficiaries can be categorized as priests. For his work on the first part of the *Ginza*, *GR* 1–13, Sheikh Idan uses a copy owned by Ram Zihrun, *DC 22*'s copyist. Sh. Idan's woman beneficiary here is Maliha, also called Parha,[42] daughter of Hawa. He copies the rest of the *Ginza* for the benefit of Hawa, daughter of Simat and of Praš.

It is only for the first part of the *Ginza* that Sheikh Idan uses Ram Zihrun's copy, and Ram Zihrun himself transcribed *his* text for a woman, Šarat Simat, given name Zaʿripa, daughter of Hawa and Sheikh ʿAziz. This may very well be the mother of the woman for whom Ram Zihrun copied *DC 22* (see just above). The women have different lineages, but both carry the same given name, Zaʿripa. As already noted, the scribes Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana appear in this *Ginza*'s lineages, as they did in *DC 22*.

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[41] Correct as written; the lineage is erroneous, for Yahia Bihram's name is repeated in Add. 23,600.

[42] Perhaps "money."

The Flushing *Ginza*, transcribed by Mr. Nasser Sobbi, was originally copied by Sh. Abdullah for the benefit of a woman. She is Šarat, daughter of Hawa, her official name being Lamia Sachet.[43] Sh. Abdullah's copy depended on one owned by Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun. Two scribal generations earlier, Bihram copied the *Ginza*. He is the scribe of *DC 40*, *The Exorcism of Salt*,[44] which he had copied in 1831 for Šarat Simat, daughter of Anhar and Dihdar Abdala, her given name being Tamam. Bihram based his work on a scroll owned by Bibia Mudalal, daughter of Adam Yuhana (*maṣbuta* name: Bibia Mudalal, daughter of Hawa Simat). Bihram is the biological son of Ram Zihrun and Bibia Mudalal, and the mother is listed in the Flushing *Ginza* in the same manner as she is in other colophons. Later on in the scribal lineage come the familiar women priests Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana.

The only new woman in the Flushing *Ginza* is a laywoman, Mudalal, daughter of Hawa Mamania and of Hadat. Mudalal is also known as Kaspa, "silver," and *GL* is copied for her benefit. As in *DC 22* and the California *Ginza*s, Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana appear as scribes in *GL*.

At the time of writing the Lake Grove *Ginza*, 1937 or 1940,[45] the copyist Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Zakia Zihrun,[46] is fifty-two years old, he says. He copies for a woman named Hawa Simat, also known as Mkafat (or: Mkafaf),[47] daughter of Šahaib. Her *maṣbuta* name is missing, and her father's name, Šahaib, is a secular one. As no woman priests are known to have existed in the twentieth century, Hawa Simat is not one. Yahia Ram Zihrun conducted his work on the basis of the book of Haašia, daughter of Šafel, whose lineage is very long and consists almost entirely of secular names. Her own name is not attested elsewhere. Haasia's book depends on that of Bibia Mudalal.

As noted in chapter 3, there is a large gap in the list of names, stretching across some sixteen lineages, in this *Ginza*, but what we have coheres with the others. In its second colophon, Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana are left out, while Bibia Mudalal, wife of Ram Zihrun, is indicated as copying this part of the *Ginza* from the *ganzibra* Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun. Colophon 3 omits Bibia Mudalal; other discrepancies occur here, too.

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[43] See chap. 3 above.

[44] As noted, this little scroll remains untranslated and unpublished, but Michael Tarelko at the University of Minsk, Belarus, is working on it.

[45] The time is inconsistent; see chap. 3 below.

[46] Yahia Ram Zihrun is either a brother or a fellow-initiate of Sh. Negm, son of Zakia Zihrun (see chap. 3 below). Zakia Zihrun is the brother of Bihram; both are sons of Ram Zihrun and Bibia Mudalal.

[47] She is indicated as "free from menstruation."

But Bibia Mudalal surfaces later, including in *GL*'s colophon. She has at least one namesake, the mother of Sam Bihram, Bibia's father-in-law. Was the mother of Sam Bihram Bibia Mudalal's own grandmother? Through her marriage to her cousin Ram Zihrun, Bibia Mudalal enters into the Buhair, ʿAziz, and Kuhailia clans, while her own father's families were, on his mother's side, Kamisia and on his father's, Riš Draz. All five are well-known priestly clans. As sister of Yahia Bihram—both siblings being children of Adam Yuhana—Bibia Mudalal is a cholera survivor along with her brother and her cousin/husband Ram Zihrun. Her lineage is identical to her brother's. It is possible that she was made a priest after the epidemic, like the others. If she already held priest status before the cholera epidemic of 1831, we must again ask why her brother Yahia Bihram never mentions this about his sister. Together with his cousin and (future?) brother-in-law Ram Zihrun, Yahia Bihram may have initiated his sister into priesthood.

A woman copyist and priest outside of these texts is Anhar, daughter of Sam Bihram, in Lamea's *Sfar Malwašia*. The book has two colophons, and she appears in the first one. I have not found her elsewhere. No clan name is supplied for her. Mhatam Zihrun, the husband of Bibia Mudalal, copies from Anhar's astrology book, and Anhar seems to belong to a generation slightly older than Yasmin Bana and her husband.

OTHER SOURCES

In *ATŠ* 2.3a, Hibil Ziwa warns against ordaining women as priests: "Beware lest ye set the crown (of priesthood) upon a woman or upon a *ganiba* (a person set aside because of uncleanliness), because there can be no putting aside with the First Life."[48] A *ganiba* is a person isolated because of ritual impurity,[49] and the word translated by Drower as "putting aside" is *gnubta*, "theft" or "ritual uncleanliness."[50] Clearly, *ATŠ* is punning, using the association between *ganiba* and *gnubta* (both depend on the verb root *GNB*)[51] and employing the context for making an ideological statement against women priests. The warning occurs in the tractate called "Wound and Heal-

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[48] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 196 §5.

[49] See *MD*, 77b.

[50] *MD*, 96a.

[51] *MD*, 95b: "put behind," "steal," etc.

ing,”[52] which is concerned with techniques for overcoming ritual impurities. The specific topic is ritual accidents or errors. Sections 2 and 3, just before the quoted segment in *ATŠ*, have described how women relatives of both priest and novice may contribute to errors in the priest initiation ritual.

In view of the women’s names in colophons—women as priests, copyists, editors, and book-owners—one may assume that Hibil Ziwa’s admonition would have been unnecessary if the idea of women priests were completely foreign in Mandaeism. Such warnings indeed show that the practice is known, debated, and debatable. According to the logic in the section, women are associated with the ritually unclean, hiding, and thievery, and therefore they are to be shut out from priesthood. On the other hand, one must keep in mind the competing view: the gender balance in the Mandaean religion. For instance, the Lightbeings have wives, even the First Life itself, whose spouse is Dmut Hiia, the “Image of Life.”

Now we turn to another enigmatic topic: the term *tarmidata*. Literally meaning “female *tarmida*s,” the term is consistently translated “women of priestly family” by Drower. For instance, in *ATŠ* 1.2, in paragraphs treating destinies after death, one finds this admonition:

> I will instruct you concerning women of Elect Righteous (stock); women of priestly and of lay families; as to those who are perfect and those who fall short of perfection, and about their trial. … But priests’ wives who … tribulation will come upon them at death, because of their embraces at times of (ritual) isolation and (because) they were obdurate in their grossness.[53]

In her note 2 to the expression “of priestly and of lay families,” Drower states that the text literally says “priestesses and laywomen.” She adds that Mandaean priestesses do not exist.[54]

However, what Drower translates as “women of priestly and of lay families” is, in the original, “*tarmidata*.” “Priests’ wives” are “ʿ*nšaiun d̲-tarmidia*.”[55] It is not obvious to me that these are identical terms. *Tarmidiata*[56] occurs also in *ATŠ* 2.5a, likewise called “Blow and Healing,” a text partially concerned with the fate of women after death. Drower again translates "women of priestly family" and adds in her note that *tarmidata* (actually: "*tarmidiata*") are not priests.[57]

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[52] Or: “Blow and Healing” (Drower is inconsistent in the translation).

[53] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 172 §239. The text is missing at the indicated break.

[54] Ibid., n. 2.

[55] Ibid., transliteration part, p. 49.

[56] The plural wavers between *tarmidiata* and *tarmidata*.

In *MII*, Drower reports that, in conversation with Mandaeans, she learned that women priests existed in the past but that there were none within recent memory. She says,

> I have been told several times that sex is not a bar to priesthood. There have been women priests and *ganzivri*, though a woman *ganzibra* can only perform one marriage ceremony; moreover in the Ginza (13th book, rt. side), there is a mention of Mandaean priestesses.[58]

Finally, after referring to the *ATŠ* passage in which Hibil Ziwa warns against ordaining women as priests, Drower makes it clear that she knows of the women priests' names in the prayer *Abahatan*, *CP* 170.[59]

Consulting *GR* 13, one discovers that the word *tarmidiata* occurs in a section dealing with Mandaeans who convert to other religions. Specifially, criticism is leveled against men who take wives from other religions and against "Jüngerinnen"—as Lidzbarski translates *tarmidiata*—and who, the text claims, become converts. (Is this a hint that Mandaean women priests, perhaps under community pressure, might have become Christian nuns?). In his note to the word *tarmidiata*, Lidzbarski states that the word cannot mean "women priests"[60] because such do not exist in the religion. But *JB*'s tractate that Lidzbarski calls "The Good Shepherd" blesses the "*tarmidiata*" who free themselves from Ruha's traps.[61] Here Lidzbarski does not offer any note regarding his translation "Jüngerinnen," which leaves the reader at liberty to intepret these women as female *tarmida*s.

In view of the conflicting evidence, the problem of how to translate *tarmidiata* remains far from settled. The passage in *ATŠ*[62] clearly worries about women priests. But the term *tarmidiata* does not occur there. Scholarly consensus has been too rash in concluding that female priests did not exist, and Drower evidently finds it difficult to make a decision, because she must take seriously what Mandaeans themselves tell her. The dominant scholarly view is set against women priests,[63] but Mandaeans see the matter differently.

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[57] Ibid., 263 (296), with n. 4.

[58] *MII*, 147.

[59] Ibid.

[60] *GR* 13, p. 285 §22, with n. 1.

[61] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 50.

[62] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 196 §5.

When I asked the Mandaean poet Lamea Abbas Amara about this issue, she told me that her grandfather, himself a priest, remembered hearing about women priests. But he had never met any, for they had existed before his lifetime. This might fit with the names I have found in colophons, especially around the lifetime of women such as the nineteenth-century Bibia Mudalal (Mamul Dihgan and Yasmin Bana belong to an earlier period). Lamea also knows the rule, reported by Drower in *MII*, regarding women priests as officiants at marriage: they may only officiate at *one* marriage ceremony.[64] In fact, when Lamea stated to me that Mandaeans have had no women priests in recent memory, she added that if such a woman priest were to perform a marriage ceremony, this act would cause her to lose her priestly office automatically. That such a ritual role is cause for loss of priestly status is a somewhat stronger statement than Drower's in *MII*.

In Ahwaz, Iran, in 1996, I asked the *yalufa* Sheikh Salem Choheili about women priests. He stressed that it is very difficult for a women to be a priest, but readily acknowledged that they had existed in the past. To my surprise, he knew about Haiuna, the ethnarch and ubiquitous copyist. When I continued, inquiring why there would have been women priests, his reply was simply, "Because they wanted to." I took this to be a significant answer, because it does not assume a woman inhabiting priestly office to be a provocation against male-dominated views but instead emphasizes a woman's own wish and decision.

Bibia Mudalal, the sister of Yahia Bihram and wife of Ram Zihrun, may have become a priest along with other people of pure and/or priestly families after the cholera. Yahia Bihram, who never mentions her as a priest, might have been reluctant to reveal that he and his cousin Ram Zihrun had ordained a woman into priesthood. The unorthodox priest initiations in 1831—*yalufa*s ordaining other sons of deceased priests—were, as we know, a necessity. Because of the immediate need for priests in a widespread—though severely diminished—Mandaean population at that time, Bibia Mudalal may well have been among those long-ago women priests known, by oral tradition, to Lamea's grandfather.

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[63] In a personal communication to me, Prof. Macuch insisted that there were never—indeed *could* never be—Mandaean women priests.

[64] *MII*, 147.

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So far, I have detected twenty-four women priests in Mandaean colophons. A couple of them may be dubious as priests, but, in general, I have erred on the conservative side. In a category of its own, *CP* 170 must be reckoned as a clear testimony to the existence of women priests. The two female *ganzibra*s listed there, Hawa and Anhar Kumraita, can be dated around 700. Haiuna, the ethnarch attested in many colophons, lived in early Islamic times, though later than the two *ganzibra*s.

There are at least twice as many named women beneficiaries and book-owners as priests in the Mandaean colophons I have examined so far. Women's priestly status is not to be determined on the basis of *maṣbuta* names. And a woman who has a text copied for her benefit is not a priest unless other evidence to that effect is forthcoming. But women in initiation relationships, in lists of priest copyists, are almost always priests.

Do women priests tend to be clustered in certain historical periods? One might give a very qualified Yes. In certain eras, there is a definite tolerance for women priests, and such affirmation may run in families. Here is a list of the women priests I have found so far in my research. They are placed, more or less roughly, within their historical time frames. Some dates are, of course, better documented than others. I identify most of the texts in whose colophons the women are found. In the list, I am not including non-priestly women who are named as beneficiaries, women book-owners, or copyists with lay lineages, or women who otherwise cannot be determined to have been priests according to my criteria.[65]

Ca. 200

Šlama, daughter of Qidra: in *GL*.

Ca. 700

The *ganzibra*s Hawa, daughter of Daiia, and Anhar Kumraita, daughter of Simat: in *CP 170*, *Abahatan*.
The ethnarch Haiuna, daughter of Tihwia and Yahia: in *ATŠ*; *CP*; *Marsh. 691*, *ARZ*; *Dmut Kušṭa*; *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*; *MHZ*; Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 12 and C 13.
Marspindu Abuzdaqad: in *CP*.

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[65] It is not possible to place in time Šadia Simat, "son" of Hawa, obviously a woman priest. She is listed as no. 18, together with Ram Sindan, among the early Mandaean luminaries who are blessed in the prayer *Abahatan* in the British Library's *Ginza* Add. 23,601.

Ca. 750–800

Hawa, daughter of Nukraya: in *GR*.

Ca. 1300

Šadia Mamania, daughter of Hibil: in *GR*.
The editor Hawa, daughter of Yahia/Yuhana Zakia: in *GR*.
Hawa, daughter of Yahia Sam: in *GR*.

15th century

Yasmin Mudalal, daughter of Adam Bihram, Zarzuia: in four *JB*s.

Mid 15th century

Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Zakia: in *CP*; in Lamea's *JB* and prayerbook.
Hawa Mahnuŝ, daughter of Yahia: in *CP*; in Lamea's *JB* and prayerbook.

Early 16th century

Mariuaria, daughter of Adam Šapur: in *CP*, *ʿniana*s, in de Morgan's *Sidra d̲-Nišmata*; beneficiary of *DC 37*.
Šahah, daughter of ʿAziz Sakma: in *CP*.
Qinta, daughter of Zihrun Adam: in *JB*.

Ca. 1700

Mamul Dihgan, daughter of Bihram: in *Ginẓa* and in *JB*.
Hawa Simat, daughter of Adam: in *GR*.
Anhar, daughter of Sam Bihram: in *Sfar Malwašia*.

17th century

Yasmin Bana, daughter of Yahia Bihram: in *GR*.
Šamiat, daughter of Yahia Bayan: in *JB*.
Simat, daughter of Adam Yuhana: in *Ginẓa* (Add. 23,599).

18th century

Mudalal and Kiria, both daughters of Dihdar Salim: in *CP*.

Mid 19th century

Bibia Mudalal, sister of Yahia Bihram, wife of Ram Zihrun: in *GR*.

PART 3: MORE TEXTS

9 LITURGY COLOPHONS

BEGINNINGS

Many versions exist of the Mandaean *Qulasta*, "the collection," the name given to the religion's liturgies.[1] Lidzbarski published his *Mandäische Liturgien*, based on two manuscripts, in 1920. Right after World War I, Drower saw her first incomplete version of the liturgies. Later she acquired another one, also incomplete (which became *DC 3*), a volume bound by Sheikh Dakhil in Amara,[2] who also added some of the missing prayers (Drower supplied yet others later on). Only in 1954 did Drower purchase what seems to be a complete *Qulasta*. This became *DC 53*, a hefty volume published as *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*.

DC 53 was copied in 1802 by the *ganzibra* Adam Yuhana, the father of Yahia Bihram.[3] He copied it for his own salvific benefit, in Huwaiza in Khuzistan—not in his own house in Basra, where, as we have seen in chapter 7, he had defeated Christians in philosophical discussions. *DC 12*, *38*, *39*, *41*,[4] and other texts also come from Adam Yuhana's hand.

Liturgies are subject to constant use, and they need frequent recopying. Mandaeans also have an unknown number of small collections of prayers, and some prayerbooks rest relatively unknown in research libraries. Colophons in a few of these books are treated in this chapter, but the colophons in *CP* take up the bulk of it.

CP is a codex containing prayers of varying lengths, from a few lines to about twelve pages in Drower's edition. *CP* contains 414 prayers in all, although quite a few, especially toward the end, are duplicates. Priests learn all by heart. Originally consisting of separate scrolls (*kurasa*s), *DC 53* has eight colophons. One must take note of *where* the eight colophons appear,[5] because the eight sections may tell us what the ancients considered to be separate texts. Of course, all the units consist of liturgies, but some parts are obviously older than others. In the chapters on the *Ginza*, I have already shown that *GL* contains the only colophon stretching back to the time *before* Zazai of Gawazta. We shall find here, regarding *CP*, that four of its eight colophons have Zazai as their first (last listed) human copyist.[6]

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[1] Part of this chapter was published as "The Colophons in *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*."

[2] The uncle of Lamea Abbas Amara.

[3] In that same year, 1802, the Wahhabis raided Karbala in Iraq.

[4] *The Exorcism of Wizards*, *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, *The Scroll of the Archer*, and *ARR*, respectively.

Separated by colophons, the *CP* contents are:

1. *CP* 1–31: *The Book of Souls* (also called *The Book of Gadana*),[7] the baptismal liturgy. A second part consists of *CP* 32–72: the *masiqta* prayers; *CP* 73 and 74: the two "Letter" (*ʿngirta*) prayers.[8]
2. *CP* 75–77: three long prayers of praise.[9]
3. *CP* 78–103: the so-called "responses" (*ʿniana*s).[10]
4. *CP* 104: a *rušuma*, i.e., "signing" prayer; *CP* 105: "The Healing of Kings"; *CP* 106–64: the *rahma*s, "devotions," prayed three times a day; *CP* 165–69: "The Fruits of Ether."[11]
5. *CP* 170: *Ṭabahatan*, "Our Ancestors;"[12] *CP* 171–78; the acrostic prayer *CP* 179; *CP* 180–99: prayers for priest initiation and for the marriage ceremony.[13]
6. *CP* 200–84, of which *CP* 205–56 are priest initiation prayers.[14]
7. CP 285–304 (duplicates of others).[15]
8. CP 305–329: priest initiation prayers.[16]

The remaining prayers, *CP* 330–414 (some of which are very long, while others are repetitions of earlier ones), have no colophon.

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[5] Drower shows where the colophons occur but translates none of them in full; some are left completely untranslated. A researcher must therefore turn to the facsimile pages of *CP*.

[6] Actually, one of them has Zazai's brother, not Zazai himself.

[7] "The Auspicious Book." *Gadana* is also a *malwašia* name.

[8] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 1–63, excluding the ritual instructions after *CP* 74 (pp. 64–72).

[9] Ibid., 72–88.

[10] Ibid., 88–102. The category "responses" is problematic. The prayers were probably originally antiphonal.

[11] Ibid., 102–48.

[12] Chapter 10 below is devoted to this prayer.

[13] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 151–69.

[14] Ibid., 171–218. The last twenty-three are duplicates of others.

[15] See Ibid., 220.

[16] Ibid., 220–31.

Unlike Drower and almost all other scholars on Mandaean religion, I avoid referring to prayers as "hymns," because no prayers are, strictly speaking, *sung* in Mandaeism. The religion operates with diffferent categories and terminologies of prayers, such as *rahma*s, *ʿniana*s, "fastening" and "loosening" prayers, and so on, and I indicate these terms as they occur.[17]

Colophons 1, 4, 5, and 8 in *DC 53* end with Zazai of Gawazta; colophon 2 with the woman priest and library owner Haiuna, daughter of Yahia;[18] colophon 3 with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana;[19] colophon 6 with the ethnarch Adam Abulfaraš;[20] and colophon 7 with this ethnarch's two assistants, Ram, son of Adam Laiit, and Bayan Hadada, son of Zihrun. With respect to the prayers covered in the segments for colophons 1, 4, 5, and 8, one may date these to the third century or earlier. Whether the prayers in the other parts of *CP* existed that early, we cannot yet know for certain.

THE *CANONICAL PRAYERBOOK*

The section of *CP* covered by colophon 1 came from a book owned by Adam Yuhana's paternal grandmother, Anhar, daughter of Šarat. She, in turn, had copied it from Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun. And so the lineages continue, down to Zazai of Gawazta, who copied "from the *Diwan* of the First Life."[21] Like all the colophons in *CP*, the first one is very long, and it contains a great deal of information, as I show in Appendix A to this chapter.

I count close to fifty "generations" between Adam Yuhana and Zazai of Gawazta. As noted with respect to the *Ginza* colophons, such calculations must be taken with a grain of salt, because copying within the same generation frequently takes place. And, a younger priest may initiate someone older than himself into priesthood; we shall have an example of such a case below.

The *ganzibra* Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, appears a number of times in colophon 1. Scribes are copying back and forth within the same time period. Yahia Adam is *not* connected to Yuhana Šitlan in Sheikh Abdullah Khaffagi's *tarik* (colophon) appended to *DC 12*.[22] The two men belong to different clans. One of Yuhana Šitlan's initiates, Anuš Zakia, shows up in Yahia Bihram's colophon to *A Phylactery for Rue* (*DC 47*).[23] From Yuhana Šitlan there are at the very least twenty-four generations of scribes to Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, in the mid seventh century. Dividing 840—the difference between 1480 and 640—by twenty-four gives thirty-seven, which is plausible as the length of a generation.

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[17] For the terminologies, see Eric Segelberg, *Maṣbuta*, 19–22.

[18] She is a copyist of several other texts, as noted in chap. 8 above.

[19] A ubiquitous copyist, of the *Ginza* and of many other texts.

[20] Also found in other colophons.

[21] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71.

[22] For *DC 12*, see especially chap. 12 below.

In addition to Adam Yuhana's grandmother, four other women appear as copyists and book-owners in this colophon. They are: Šaha(h), daughter of ʿAziz Sakma of the Wašia clan; Mariuaria, daughter of Adam; Šadia;[24] and the illustrious Haiuna, daughter of Tihwia[25] and Yahia. All of these are priests, and we have met them in chapter 8. Haiuna's son Bainai (alternative form: Bayan) owned a library together with her. Bainai's initiator was his own brother, Zakia, also a son of Haiuna. Both Bainai and his mother appear in *CP* 170, *Ṭabahatan*, the great commemorative prayer, as we shall see in chapter 10. Significantly, mother and son are listed in this prayer under the rubric *riš amia*, "head of the people," the highest Mandaean religious office.

As noted previously, copyists are usually identified in relation to their initiators, "fathers," but in the very oldest parts of a colophon, some seem to be listed by *maṣbuta* names—that is, in relation to their mothers. Whether the mothers may have been initiators is an unsettled question, as noted in chapter 8. For several centuries (including in early Islamic times), there may have been a conflict between two separate Mandaean ideologies, reflecting the increasing importance of an organized priesthood.[26] On the one hand, there is the tradition of *maṣbuta* names; on the other, the emerging consolidation of a more or less hereditary priesthood favors a designation in relation to the initiating priest (whether male or female).

Zazai of Gawazta, for instance, is listed in colophon 1 as "son of Hawa," while the name of his father, Naṭar, occurs more rarely. Ramuia is always designated in relation to his mother, ʿQaimat. Both men and women copyists are identified by *maṣbuta* name in ritual contexts. But a woman placed in relation to her mother may, at times, indicate an initiation relationship. (In chap. 10 I show that *one* version of the commemoration prayer

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[23] See chap. 7 for the postscript to this scroll.

[24] At this point the text seems corrupt. My reading is based on helpful advice from the late Prof. R. Macuch (pers. comm., 25 March 1990); see my "The Colophons in … *Sidra Rabba*," 37 n. 43, for a fuller explanation.

[25] This is not a baptismal name.

[26] See chap. 14 below.

Abahatan uses initiation, not *maṣbuta*, names). Among the ancient copyists are three sons/pupils of Zindana: Yuhana, ʿQaiam, and Bayan Hibil ʿQaiam. These are linked to their male initiator, Zindana,[27] while Ramuia, several scribal links removed from Zindana's pupils, is not.

In between the three sons of Zindana and Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, one finds, among other scribes, Nukraya, son of Šitil. He lived in the very earliest Islamic period. Nukraya copied the first part of *CP* by consulting no less than *seven* manuscripts (*ṭupsia*). One of these, Nukraya says, belonged to Faruk, son of Marspindu Abuzdaqad (the woman priest), but his copy was later destroyed, as was a second one. Another one belonged to "a library in a house of 'a People of the Book,'"[28]—that is, Jews or Christians. Yet another one came from "a town of Byzantines,"[29] which indicates Christians.

It is truly intriguing that at the time of Nukraya, parts of Mandaean liturgies would be present in non-Mandaean libraries. What does this mean, historically? Were the Mandaean baptismal, death-mass, and two "letter" prayers "generically Gnostic" enough (so to speak) to be of interest to non-Mandaeans? Was it common to have the books of other religions in, say, Christian libraries? When Nukraya says "a library of a house of 'a People of the Book,'" does he include or exclude his own religion by using the term "a People of the Book" (*anašia ḏ-ktiba*)?

Place names in *CP*'s colophon 1, in the section on the seven consulted manuscripts, include Mašiun, the province of Maisan in lower Babylonia. A more mysterious place is *bit hurdšaiia*, which might indicate Khuzistan.[30] Adam, son of Ninia ("mint"), who appears a couple of generations after Bainai, son of Haiuna, states that he went to *bit hurdšaiia* for the purpose of scrutinizing his own *masiqta* liturgy in relation to local ones. Carefully comparing his own text with the others, he concludes, "When I saw that it was reliable, I wrote this *masiqta* just as it was. And any priest or Mandaean who prays, shall hold on to this *masiqta*."[31]

A postscript to *CP* 1–31 states that Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, wrote down these prayers, copying them from the library of his own son, Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat. Now, right here, we find both Ramuia's *maṣbuta* name and his initiation designation in the same text segment. So, Ramuia is the initiate of Bayan Hibil, who may well be the husband of ʿQaimat.

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[27] Regarding Zindana, see chap. 8 n. 25 above.

[28] *Anašia ḏ-ktiba*; Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook,* facsimile p. 98.

[29] M*ahuẓa ḏ-bit rumaiia*; ibid.

[30] See Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 208, 211.

[31] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71.

The baptismal liturgy was contained in one of Ramuia's scrolls, one called "The Great Wellspring."[32] After copying the prayers from his own son, Bayan Hibil "distributed [them] among a hundred Naṣoraeans."[33]

He specifies that Ramuia's scroll was written in the scribal center Ṭib and placed in the library of Haiuna and her son Bainai. The mother–son team Haiuna and Bainai again appears as guardians of their library, now identified as the repository for Ramuia's treasured scroll of baptismal prayers.

Bayan Hibil himself lived just at the cusp of Islam, or perhaps he is pre-Islamic.

At the end of the first colophon, Bayan Hibil states,

> I purified myself when I got possession of these mysteries. And I myself travelled around and went on foot to Naṣoraeans and took many *diwans* place to place.[34] And nowhere did I find "mysteries" as reliable as these Mysteries of Baptism and Oil-of-Unction. I have written them here and have distributed them to a hundred Naṣoraeans, so that they may hold on to and be staunch to them.[35]

Bayan Hibil exhorts his fellow priests to adhere to *his* version of the baptismal liturgy, *The Book of Souls*, for he is attempting to create a canon in this respect. Macuch observes that Bayan Hibil's statement proves the existence of numerous versions or copies of liturgical collections in the mid seventh century.[36] Speaking of *CP* 73 and 74 (the last prayers covered by colophon 1), Bayan Hibil emphasizes that he has copied them correctly. "As far as Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, their mysteries are like these," he adds sweepingly. "Jerusalem" probably means Babylon, "the Jerusalem of the East."[37] But if we take "Jerusalem" literally as the geographical Jerusalem, it is doubtful that Mandaeans were that far-flung at the time of Bayan Hibil.

Ram Ziwa Bihram, one of Bayan Hibil's initiates, adds his own postscript at the end of *CP* 74, in which he threatens with dire consequences anyone who removes *zharas* (i.e., name insertions), changes the text, cuts off part of the copy, or removes the name of its owner.[38] He calls the entire text of *CP* 1–74 the *Book of Gadana* ("The Auspicious Book"), and he also mentions Ramuia's—his contemporary and co-initiate—"*Diwan* of the Great Wellspring."[39] Finally, the postscript to *CP* 31, which marks the end of the baptismal liturgy, preserves a statement by Yahia Adam, son of the *ganzibra* Sam Saiwia. He is one of the copyists of *CP*'s first colophon. Yahia Adam assures his readers that when he got hold of Ramuia's copy, which was in the care of Haiuna, he, Yahia Adam, "put it together and arranged it as it was written originally, and removed nothing from it."[40]

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[32] Ibid., 72. This scroll may be the one mentioned in *Diwan Malkuta ʿLaita* (*DMʿL*), see my *Scroll of Exalted Kingship*, 21 line 328.

[33] Ibid., 32.

[34] See Macuch, "Anfänge," 182, for corrections to Drower's translation.

[35] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71–72. Drower translates "Oil" as "Oil-of-Unction," but only the word "oil" appears in the facsimile of the text on p. 99.

[36] Macuch, "Anfänge," 182.

[37] Ibid.

Later I shall return to two specific copyists of colophon 1, Bayan Hibil's father Brik Yawar, son of Bihdad, and Ska Manda. The latter appears rarely in colophons, but Brik Yawar is ubiquitous. In dealing with the text *ARR*, he expresses fear that it might be counterfeit:

> When this Diwan fell into my possession from Life, I was afraid. I took it and cast it into the water but the water did not accept it. Twice I threw it into the fire but the fire did not accept it, for I was afraid of the Life and of the condemnation which might be passed on me.[41]

I estimate Brik Yawar to have lived around 560–600, while we know that Ramuia belongs to the mid seventh century. Ramuia's statement on *CP* 1–74 in the postscript to *CP*'s colophon 1 shows remarkable historical precision:

> From the day on which it fell from (*was written by*) Zazai d̲-Gawazta son of Hawa till now, the years in which I wrote it, is (*a space of*) 368 years in the ages. … I wrote this Diwan in the town of Tib in the years when Anuš, son of Danqa, departed with the heads of the people (ethnarchs) in the years when the Arabs advanced.[42]

This tells us that Anuš, son of Danqa, was an ethnarch who went with other Mandaean leaders to the Muslim authorities in order to convince them that the Mandaeans qualified as a "People of the Book." We can date Zazai around 270 and both Anuš and Ramuia to 638. Between Ramuia and

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[38] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 72.

[39] See n. 32 above.

[40] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 32.

[41] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 52. For a famous example of Ruha leading a priest into error by pretending to be a force of Light, see the legend of Qiqil, Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 13–14.

[42] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71.

Zazai are about eight generations, 380 years. These are early (but not *the* earliest) years of Mandaean copyist activity. Zazai's presence around 270 presupposes an organized religion with texts and rituals. The Manichaean "Psalms of Thomas"[43] are relevant here, as they belong in the late third century and contain paraphrases or translations of Mandaean poetry. Regarding *GL*, it is well to recall that its colophon includes named scribes from even before Zazai's time.

Nukraya's statement regarding the seven copies of the text can be taken to indicate a certain "Gnostic internationalism," as noted earlier. Prior to Islam's emergence, Mandaean texts were copied, collected, canonized, and promulgated. *CP*'s postscripts give excellent testimonies to these activities. Macuch sees all of this as proof of Mandaeism's vitality and expansion, as opposed to merely defensive measures in the face of Islam.[44] Mandaeans, who perhaps very early on enjoyed Qur'an-based protection as a "People of the Book," hoped not just to survive but to flourish. Oral Mandaean traditions probably existed early on and soon developed into written ones (see chap. 15 below), and the busy scribal activity around 600–700 testifies to the need for codification and organization of the sources. Long before that, Zazai's late third century activities can be interpreted as a drive toward a canonical literature.

No other parts of *CP* contain as much historical information as those quotations I have just treated. Adam Yuhana, copying *DC 53* in 1802, takes care to preserve the statements of ancestral copyists, which shows his great respect for them. It is clear that the baptismal liturgy, the *masiqta* prayers, and the *ʿngirta* poems belong to a very early stage of the religion. Perhaps it was necessary to create or uphold borders against other Gnostic liturgies. The effort to unify the liturgies shows the need to stem the potential tide of aberrations, innovations, and variations in the central rituals.[45]

For such *did* occur. The Mandaean religion, so concerned with orthopraxis, occasionally reveals that priests willfully took matters into their own hands. In *CP*'s colophon 2, after *CP* 77, a copyist is singled out as a bad example: Zihrun, son of Sku Hiia. A pupil of Ram Ziwa Bihdad[46] (early Islamic times), Zihrun was "defrocked," ejected from office for having practiced "foreign" magic: "he copied from the people who make magical signs, from the town of Šilurupta."[47]

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[43] See Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies*, 85–166.

[44] Macuch, "Anfänge," 184–86.

[45] Compare Yahia Bihram's work to consolidate and order the liturgies in the aftermath of the 1831 cholera (chap. 7 above).

[46] Note that two different "sonships" are indicated in Zihrun's case.

The time of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, is about the eighth century. In colophon 2, following *CP* 75–77, the document is called "*sidra*" during the span of time from the 1802 copyist, Adam Yuhana, until ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. From ʿQaiam on further back into time, the text is dubbed "scroll" (*šapta*), and, in the very earliest times: "*diwan*."[48] In colophon 1, the terminology changed from *sidra* to *šapta* at the exact same spot. This may be another piece of evidence for the collation of the liturgies from scroll to codex format in the early Islamic period. The two first colophons of *DC 53* intersect in certain places, though in the main they differ from one another (see Appendixes A and B below).

Three new women appear in colophon 2, all of them priests, copyists, and owners of books. Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Zakia Diqnana, is a "pure cloud" and has a son, Bihram, son of Bayan Šupartaiia. He copied from his mother's book. The two other women are: Mudalal, daughter of Dihdar Salim, and Hawa Mahnuš, daughter of Yahia.

About three generations before Hawa Mahnuš, we find an example of two men copying from one another's books: Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan Šupartaiia, and Baktiar, son of Yuhana. Šad Manda, son of Ska Yawar, is listed as a library owner here in colophon 2, as he was in the first colophon. Colophon 2 ends with Haiuna as the first copyist of *CP* 75–77.

Two other women copyists appear in colophon 3. First, the priest Kiria, daughter of Salim, seems to be a fellow initiate of Mudalal in colophon 2. The second one is an unnamed "pure cloud" close in time to Kiria. A copyist appearing in many other connections—the *Ginza*, *JB*, *ARR*, and *ATŠ*—shows up here in colophon 3 of *CP* for the first time: Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan Zarzuia. To some extent, colophon 3 follows its predecessor, but it ends with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. The great-grandson of Zindana, Ram Zihrun Bihdad (mentioned above in connection with the magician Zihrun in colophon 2), appears here in the third colophon, copying from a scroll belonging to his grandfather, ʿQaiam.

The division between the material covered by colophon 3 and the next segment, which starts with *CP* 104, can be seen as natural insofar as we here arrive at the end of the the *ʿniana*s, *CP* 78–103. Next starts the prayer ut-

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[47] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, facsimile p. 121. It is unclear where the town is; see Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 213, under the rubric *Siruft*.

[48] Does this mean that the text originally had illustrations?

tered daily by all Mandaeans, *CP* 104. "The Healing of Kings," *CP* 105, comes next, and after it the *rahma*s in succession. Drower notes that the segment ending with colophon 4 marks the point where prayerbooks begin to diverge with respect to the order of prayers, but not to the contents.[49]

Colophons 4 and 5 both go back to Zazai, and both cover important sets of prayers. Adam Yuhana copied these not from his grandmother's book, but from the craftsman Baktiar, son of Mhatam Zihrun. Each of the collections of prayers is called just that: *qulasta*, not *sidra*. The copyist lineages are new, only rarely intersecting with those of the first three colophons. Colophon 4 includes the oft-met copyist Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, an ethnarch listed in *CP* 170. Another scribe, Bihram Bayan, one of the many sons of Yahia Baz, had as his first priest candidate his own uncle, his father's brother.

A well-known figure, Adam Abulfaraš, son of Bihram Šitil, appears in colophon 5. He has already been noted as "head of the people" and "head of the age." His name comes first in the list of ethnarchs in *Abahatan*, the prayer for the ancestors (*CP* 170). One of the Mandaean folktales collected by Drower features Adam Abulfaraš as a dervish impressing many fellow religionists and also outwitting a fire-worshipper magician with his own Mandaean powers.[50]

From Anuš Maʿilia on, the fourth and fifth colophons overlap completely, except that colophon 4 makes a detour via Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia. Otherwise, the colophons go to Bainai, son of Zakia, via Haiuna, Ramuia, and Šganda to Zazai. Haiuna is the only woman in these two lists.

It is significant that colophon 6 covers the marriage and priest initiation *Kd azil bhira dakia* prayers, namely, those beginning with the words, "When the proven, pure one went" (*CP* 205–85). These prayers seem to extend back to the time of Zazai (and beyond), and one may perhaps assume that the priest initiation prayers were applied to that ritual only later, because we know nothing of an organized priesthood at such an early date. Adam Abulfaraš marks the end of the colophon. Helped by his two assistants (Adam Laiit and Bayan Hadada, son of Zihrun), Adam Abulfaraš copied the prayers twice. The manuscript is said to derive from a *diwan* on the *Kd azil* prayers.

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[49] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 150, "Translator's Note." However, collections of prayers contain mainly baptismal and *masiqta* prayers.

[50] *MII*, 292–300; see also Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 44 n. 5 (where Drower errs in assigning Adam Abulfaraš as "head of the age" to the time period of the scribe, Adam Yuhana).

The last two lists, colophons 7 and 8, contain prayers identical to others in *CP*. The prayers preceding the very last colophon are the so-called "coronation prayers," *CP* 305–29, used in priest initiation. Most of the lineages in the last two colophons follow colophons 4 and 5, and they list Haiuna as the only woman. Colophon 7 ends with the assistants of Adam Abulfaraš—as in colophon 6, while colophon 8 at its end follows the fifth colophon, ending with Zazai.

As noted, 414 prayers occur in *CP*, but many, especially toward the end, are duplicates. At the end of the entire *qulasta*, there is no colophon, which would seem to testify to a looseness, a lack of canonization at the end of the collection.

The sets of prayers in *DC 53* that cannot be traced back to Zazai's copy—though they *might* have been part of Mandaeism in the third century—are the contents preceding colophons 2, 3, 6, and 7. However, this needs to be slightly modified, for *CP* 180–99 occur *twice* in *CP*, before colophons 5 and 7, which, due to their presence in the colophon 5 segment, secures the prayers' early age. Of the *Kd azil* prayers, twenty-five have duplicates, and *CP* 200– 204 lack any designation.

We have no direct evidence of a purely oral stage of the Mandaean religion. The valuable testimonies in the first segment of *CP* show that when codification and canonization of the liturgies take place, both before and in the earliest Islamic period, the scribes are concerned with already existing texts. Internal competition and pressures contribute to the codifications. But in terms of a recognized "holy text" in the Islamic sense, the *Ginza*, not *CP*, merits that status. For external recognition, the *Ginza* is central, while for internal Mandaean purposes, a coherent and codified liturgy remains crucial. Lacking a central, "peak-of-the-pyramid" authority, Mandaeism needs to secure its true center: orthodox texts. According to the testimonies we have seen (and will see further on, in chapter 15), the considerable spread of the religion necessitates collations of a reliable corpus of ritual texts.

Liturgies need to be recopied at a greater rate than texts that predominantly rest protected in their white cotton bags, without regular wear and tear. Especially the prayers *CP* 1–73 are in constant use, and these, particularly the baptismal and *masiqta* prayers, mark the foundation of Mandaean ritual life. Significantly, colophon 1 gives the most detailed list of scribes and the fullest postscripts.

That there is no trace of anti-Islamic polemics in *CP* gives a clue to the age of the liturgies. Religions such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity become the butt of polemics, but not Islam. The common curse on the Arabs found so often in colophons does not appear in *DC 53*. Even though Adam Yuhana certainly knew the curse,[51] he does not use it in *CP*, as it was obviously not part of the received transmission of the liturgies.

DC 3, MS. SYR. E 15, AND OTHER SMALL COLLECTIONS OF PRAYERS

Drower bought her first, incomplete copy of the liturgies in 1933. This was *DC 3*, copied in 1880 by the *tarmida* Adam Zihrun, son of Yahia Bihram, of the Manduia clan. *DC 3* contains only one colophon, after *CP* 385, and has merely six scribal lineages. The concise place name for the copying of *DC 3* remains obscure: "by the ford[52] of the water, in my own house."

Using a flowery phrase, Adam Yuhana states that he has been transcribing with a mind protected from the pollutions and adornments placed into the world by Ruha. He copied from Bayan, son of Mhatam. Bayan is also known by the name Bakhtiar, and it is under that name that we find him as copyist in *DC 53*'s fourth colophon. Among the other copyists in *DC 3* is Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun, Manduia and ʿKuma. Ram Yuhana's mother, Šamiat, daughter of Yahia Bayan, belongs among the women priests mentioned in chapter 8, and Ram Yuhana himself is known as a copyist in contexts other than *DC 3* (including colophons 1 and 2 of *DC 53*).

DC 3's colophon ends with Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, Kuhailia, and Yahia Yuhana is a very prolific scribe, found in a number of contexts, including three *Ginza*s at least. He is the brother of Zakia Zihrun (also son of Ram), *ATŠ*'s scribe. Because Zakia Zihrun copied *ATŠ* in 1677,[53] we can date Yahia Yuhana to the seventeenth century.

The little prayerbook identified by the call number Ms. Syr. E 15 rests in the Bodleian Library, hidden (mistakenly) under the category "Syriac Mss." Consisting of 151 folios glued onto book-pages, the document contains "*ʿniania udrašia uqaiamta d̲rahmia uʿniania udrašia*."[54] It was copied by Mhatam Yuhana, son of Adam Yuhana, of the Sabur clan, in 1849 (the usual curse on the Arabs is included in the dating). I take the scribe to be among the *yalufa*s initiated into priesthood by Ram Zihrun and Yahia Bihram. Note that Mhatam Yuhana identifies himself by his own, biological lineage. The father's, Adam Yuhana's, secular name is given as Sheikh Šukar. (Mhatam Yuhana also copied the postscript to *HG*, in 1835.) Only one lineage is offered apart from Mhatam Yuhana's own, that of Ram Zihrun, the cholera survivor, from whom Mhatam Yuhana copied the prayerbook. He calls Ram Zihrun "Sheikh Abdullah," a designation I had learned from present-day Mandaeans but never seen in writing.

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[51] For instance, it occurs in his copy of *DC 38*, *Šarh* d̲-*Qabin*.

[52] For (the conjectural) "ford" see *MD*, 149a, s.v. *HLP*.

[53] Zakia Zihrun receives special attention in chap. 12 below.

[54] The two last phrases are obvious repetitions.

The copying was done in the Mandaean quarter of Suq eš-Šuyuk, Margab, in the home of Ram Zihrun. "And our brothers (i.e., fellow-Mandaeans) are in Šuštar," says Mhatam Yuhana. Then he adds that he himself, together with his brother, his own two children, and his wife all went to Šuštar. He lists a number of texts that the Mandaeans of Šuštar had and that evidently were copied for him. The texts are: *The Book of the Zodiac*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, *Zihrun Raza Kasia*, *The Diwan of the Body of Adam* (possibly the part of *ATŠ* called "Tafsir Pagra"), *Diwan Abatur*, and *Alma Rišaia Rba*.

It was exciting to discover *Dmut Kušṭa* in such a list, for I had never before seen a reference to it in a Mandaean postscript. Interestingly, Mhatam Yuhana then informs the reader that he offered to pay a fee for the copying task, but it was refused. Consequently, "My heart fell from its support," Mhatam Yuhana confesses. Using this traditional phrase, he shows his dismay, for his honor is at stake. He did not feel right about the copying being provided for free. In the wake of the traumatic cholera, the graciously given free copies are understandable, but it made Mhatam Yuhana a debtor. At least, while he was in Margab he had copied the little prayer-book himself.

The Bodleian's Ms. Syr. F. 2 (R), a collection of prayers, is a document used by Lidzbarski in producing his *Mandäische Liturgien*, in 1920. He refers to the scroll as "Oxford Roll F." A note accompanying the scroll states that it was photographed for him in 1906. Father Anastase-Marie of St. Elijah in Baghdad attached a letter (from 1901) to the scroll, in which he explains how colophons are done, and Drower another note. On the back of the scroll is *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, the wedding liturgy, which I will not treat here.

At the end, the text lists the included liturgies: "This is the Scroll of Panja, the Scroll of the Rahmas of the Panja, and the Scroll of the Dove-Sacrifice on the Day of Panja, and the Scroll of the Dukhranas of the Great, Unique One, which is the 'opening of the mandi,' and the Scroll of 'the Giving of Clothes.'"[55] In exquisite script, Adam Yuhana (our old friend by now) created this collection in 1788, "at the waters of the Euphrates." He adds that there is no governor at the time. In Buršaiid(?), however, the ruler is Pasha Abd Husin. Eight scribal lineages occur at the end of the document, showing that the scroll extends only to the sixteenth century. Many of the copyists are known from other contexts; there are no women copyists.

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[55] For the complexities of Mandaean liturgies, specific feasts and holidays, categories of prayers, etc., see Drower, *MII*, chap. 6.

The very same phrasing as in the quotation listing the scrolls, just above, is found at the end of *DC 24*: *Šarh d̲-Parwanaiia*. This document, now published, was written by Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, in 1832. But Yahia Bihram did not use his father's document, and only at Bihram BrHiia, the elder, do the colophons cohere. In both texts, the scribal list ends with Bihram, son of Yahia Ram,[56] Riš Draz.

Lamea Abbas Amara's father, Bayan br Manu, had a small prayerbook written for him by his brother-in-law, Sh. Dakhil, in 1921. It measures 8″ by 6½″. The book contains no other lineage than Sh. Dakhil's own, and the postscript is largely formulaic. Sh. Dakhil says that he wrote the book "in a village by a marsh" in Huwaiza, in the governorship of the Turks. The ruler is Sheikh Kaz'al, son of Šabur, son of Mirdan, the scribe says, and he gives the name of the person in whose house he completed the copying task: "the beloved son of Šasit, son of Faris, son of ʿSimia, son of Salit, son of Misin, son of Hamar, son of ʿAziz, son of Salm, of the family Kamisia, Riš Draz."

Many other prayer collections exist, such as *DC 50*, the liturgy for the 360 baptisms (required to rectify certain ritual errors), the wedding liturgy, and others.[57] As for J. de Morgan's *ʿniana*s, I will not deal with them here but refer the interested reader to my article on de Morgan's texts.[58]

In the next chapter I return to a specific part of *CP*, namely *CP* 170, the great commemoration prayer of the dead, in order to research the names enumerated in it. But first, as a final segment to the present chapter, I include two appendices giving the full colophons 1 and 2 in *CP*. I rely on Drower's translations but control them against the *CP* facsimile parts.[59]

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[56] "Ram" is left out in Ms. Syr. F.2 (R).

[57] The Bodleian Library prayerbook known as *Marsh. 691* is treated in chap. 12 below.

[58] "A Study of the Two Liturgical Collections."

[59] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 69–71 (facsimile pp. 96–99). I leave out the first formulaic phrases of both colophons.

APPENDIX A: *CP* COLOPHON 1 (TO *CP* 1–74)

I am rbai

Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, son of Bihram, son of Saʿdan, son of Msaʿad, family name Kamisia, clan name Riš Draz.

I copied (it) for myself from the book (*sidra*) of a pious, upright, and believing (woman), whose mind is pure, in whose mind there is no lechery, lust, or harlotry. She consecrated herself and loved the Truth, and she copied this *Book of Gadana* so that there might be a commemoration for her in Tibil and above in the great upper worlds of Light. She was my father's mother; her baptismal name was Anhar, daughter of Šarat. May there be refreshment of Life for her! And her given name was ʿDiia, daughter of Adam, son of Saʿad, clan name Šuiria.

She copied it from the great, lofty, treasured R. Ram Yuhana, son of R. Yahia Zihrun, son of R. Zihrun, son of R. Adam, son of R. Yahia Adam, son of R. Šitil, son of R. Ram, son of R. Zakia, son of R. Yahia, son of R. Zakia, son of a father of *ganzibra*s: R. Mhatam, son of R. Sam, family name Manduia, clan name ʿKuma, who copied it from the book of the lofty and treasured

R. Yahia Zihrun, son of R. Yahia Bihram, son of R. Adam, son of R. Yahia Adam, family name Manduia, clan name ʿKuma, who copied it for a pious man, craftsman Hadaiat,[60] son of craftsman Qasim, son of Bihram, son of Zakria, of the sons of Dihdaria, clan name Sabur, from the book of

R. Zihrun, son of *aṣṭa* Faruk,[61] *aṣṭa* Nuruz,

whose baptismal name is Bihram,[62] son of Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia, son of Zihrun, son of Yahia Anuš, son of the great, lofty, and treasured R. Mhatam, son of Yahia Bayan, son of Yuhana Sadan, of the sons of Dihdaria, clan name Šabur;

who copied it from the book of Šaha.

And her baptismal name is Hawa Mamania, daughter of ʿAziz, clan name Wašia;

which she copied from the book of Bihram BrHiia, son of Adam Zakia BrHiia, son of Baktiar, son of Adam Bihram, clan name Kuhailia;

which he copied from the great, lofty, and treasured master-mason of knowledge and discernment, a noble and distinguished *ganzibra*, select and pious, who was devoted to the First Life, a son of a steadfast root, a son of a distinguished family, our teacher

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[60] Hadaiat is also in the scribal list in *DC 3*.

[61] "Son of" is left out.

[62] For the doubling of names, see chap. 3 above.

Yahia Bihram, son of a father of *ganzibra*s: R. Sam Bihran, son of Yahia, son of Zakia, son of Yuhana, family name Buhaiir, clan name Zakia.

May Manda d̠-Hiia forgive him his sins! For he was tormented. He wrote this book so that there might be a commemorator for him in Tibil and above in the worlds of Light. (So) he copied from the *zhara*s that the lofty and treasured *ganzibra* copied:

R. Mhatam Zihrun, son of BrHiia, son of Baktiar, son of Adam Bihram, clan name Kuhailia. May Manda d̠-Hiia forgive him his sins! He copied it for Sam Yuhana, son of Mhatam Bulbul, son of Sam ʿAsikir,

from the book of

R. Adam Baktiar, son of Yahia Zakia Zihrun, son of Yuhana Šitlan, clan name Riš Draz; from the book that his uncle copied:

Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, clan name Riš Draz;

from the book that he copied for himself: R. Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, clan name Riš Draz;[63] which he copied from the book of

Mariuaria, daughter of Adam, son of Yahia Šapur, who copied it (from)

R. Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, clan name Riš Draz,

from the book of

R. Zihrun, son of Bihdad Šakuania.

He copied it (from)

R. Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, clan name Riš Draz,

from the book of the brother of his father's father:

R. Zihrun, son of Bihdad, Riš Draz,

which he copied (from)

R. Yahia Yuhana, son of Bihdad, son of Anuš Maʿilia, from an ancient book that was housed with him, (with) Yahia Yuhana Bihdad,[64] son of Anuš Maʿilia—they have endured. He copied it from his grandfather's brother, Sarwan, son of Adam Šabur. And he completed it (i.e.):

Yahia Yuhana Bihdad, son of Anuš Maʿilia. They copied the *zhara*s and the prayers from the book in the manuscript (*kdib d̠-ʿda*) of his father,

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[63] Drower stops translating the colophon at this spot; see *Canonical Prayerbook*, 70. I continue.

[64] Conflation of what were *two* names just above.

Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. And, again, from a book that was housed with them from a manuscript of Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia,
from a book that was housed with Baktiar, son of Zakia,
originally from a book of Hibil, son of Šitluia.
They copied it: Sam Ziwa ʿQaiam, son of Hibil and Šad Zihrun,
(for) his brother(s) Adam and Ska Yawar, sons of Yahia Talauan.
They copied from a book of
Hibil, son of Zakia Hibil. He copied from
Šaiar, son of Zihrun, from a book of
Šaiar, son of Yuhana; and Šaiar copied it (from)
Šaiar, son of Zihrun, from a book of
Yuhana, son of Zindana. And Yuhana copied it (from) his teacher:
Ram Ziwa Bihram,[65] son of Bayan Hibil, from his own book. He
copied it from a book of his father
Bayan Hibil,
from a book of a son of
Brik Yawar,
and his maternal grandfather
ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. And Bayan Hibil (and) ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, copied from a scroll (*šapta*) of Bayan, son of Gadana
which was in the library of
Šad Manda, son of Zka [i.e., Ska] Yawar. And Hibil[66] copied from a scroll of his father's teacher, son of the teacher of his brother. He copied it from a scroll of
Brik Manda, son of Ska Manda. And Brik Manda copied from a scroll of
Šadia.[67] Harmuzdukt made this copy, and Baspura copied from his teacher,[68] Nukraya, son of Šitil.
And Nukraya copied from seven copies (*ṭupsia*):
one by Papa Anuš; one that was destroyed; one that he (Papa) had from his father Zurbaz; one from an old scroll in the name of his master. There was no book housed in the library of Qaiuma, son of Ninia from Ṣihla; one that was with (the people) from a Byzantine town; and one of Faruk, son of Marspindu Abuzdaqad. And Faruk copied from Šušumaq, a copy that was ruined by itself; and one from a library in a house of a "People of the Book," of a great-

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[65] Note: Yuhana is identified in relation to two different men.
[66] i.e., Bayan Hibil.
[67] A woman.
[68] This sentence seems corrupt; see my "The Colophons," 37 n. 43.

grandfather[69] of Yahia Yuhana Bihdad, son of Anuš Maʿilia and Šabur, son of Dukt, from Mašiun, in the land of Burka.[70]

And his great-great-grandfather and Šabur copied from

Brik Manda, and Brik Manda copied from

Adam Šabur, son of Ninia, and Adam Šabur copied from a son (of)[71] Ziqa, son of Ninia.

And Adam Šabur said,

"I went to Bit Hurdšaiia and travelled a great deal but found no reliable *masiqta* equal to this *masiqta*. When I saw that it was reliable, I wrote this *masiqta* just as it was. Any priest or Mandaean who prays, shall hold on to this *masiqta*. And now, priests who hold on to it, be loyal to this *masiqta* so that there may be a forgiver of your sins, and the Life and Manda d̲-Hiia and all the *ʿutra*s, the sons of Light, shall be your helpers! But anyone who does not agree to it, we will abandon and we will not approach him. May Life be Victorious!" s—a

So, these prayers were arranged from the "Explanation of Prayers of the Baptism and the *Masiqta*," which was copied from the scroll (*diwan*) of

Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat. Our father wrote (it):

Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, and our teacher Bayan, son of Zakia. It was in his library, for Bayan, son of Brik Yawar, wrote these *zhara*s. He distributed them in these books among a hundred Naṣoraeans from his own *diwan*, which he copied from the *diwan* of

Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat,

which was housed by

Haiuna, daughter of Yahia, and

Bayan, son of Zakia. For it was written in the town of Ṭib,

and Zakia copied it from the *diwan* of

Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat.

And Yahia[72] copied from the *diwan* of

Sam, son of Anuš Yahia,

and Sam copied from the scroll of

Bihram, son of Brik Alaha,

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[69] But I no longer take "Hurmuzdukt" as "Hurmuz, son of Dukt," as I did in 1992.

[70] *Burka*, "knee," may refer to a bend in a river.

[71] Drower now picks up her translation again, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 70.

[72] Error for "Zakia"? If not, perhaps here is a break in the text.

and Anuš[73] Alaha copied from the *diwan* of
ʿQaiam, son of Šarat,
and ʿQaiam copied from
ʿQaiuma, son of Brik Alaha,
and ʿQai (u)ma copied from
Šganda, son of Yasmin,
and Šganda, son of Yasmin copied from the *diwan* of
Zazai of Gawazta, son of Hawa,
and Zazai of Gawazta copied from the "*Diwan* of the First Life."[74]

APPENDIX B: *CP* COLOPHON 2 (TO *CP* 75–77)

I am *rbai*[75]
Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, son of Bihram, son of Saʿdan, son of Msaʿad, family name Kamisia, clan name Riš Draz.
I copied it for myself—labored and succeeded in it [i.e., the work]—from a book of a pure cloud, with a pure mind, in whom there is no lust, lechery, or harlotry; she is my father's mother, baptismal name:
Anhar, daughter of Šarat, and her given name is ʿDiia, daughter of Adam, son of Saʿad, clan name Šuiria; (s)he copied it from the great, lofty, treasured
R. Ram Yuhana, son of R. Yahia Zihrun, son of R. Zihrun, son of R. Adam, son of R. Yahia Adam, son of R. Šitil, family name Manduia, clan name ʿKuma;
from a book of the great, lofty, and treasured
R. Yahia Zihrun, son of R. Yahia Bihram, son of R. Adam, son of R. Yahia Adam, son of R. Šitil, son of R. Ram, family name Manduia, clan name ʿKuma,
which he copied for a pious craftsman
Hadaiat, son of Qasim, son of Hadat, son of Bihram, son of Zihrun, from the sons of Dihdaria, clan name Sabur.
He copied from a book of
Mudalal,[76] daughter of Dihdar Salim, son of Dihdar Ganim, family name Quṭana, which (s)he copied from a book of

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[73] Error, it seems.

[74] Now follows Ramuia's statement about Anuš bar Danqa (see above).

[75] Drower does not translate this colophon; as noted, I translate from *Canonical Prayerbook*, facsimile pp. 120–22.

[76] With Mudalal, the lineage in colophon 2 starts to diverge from that of colophon 1. However, a close comparison between the two reveals many overlaps in the next several generations of scribes.

Aṣṭa ʿAziz, son of Aṣṭa Faruk, son of Adam Yuhana, son of Yahia, of the sons of Dihdaria, clan name Sabur;
which he copied from the book of
Šahah, daughter of ʿAziz Sakma, clan name Wašia;
which (s)he copied from a book of the great, lofty, and treasured *ganzibra*—chosen and pious, a leader and a learned man, son of a steadfast root, a son of kings, who is treasured and from an elevated family—
R. Sarwan Bahran, son of Adam Baktiar, son of Sam Bahran, clan name Zakia, son of Yuhana, family name Buhaiir, Zarzuia—he guarded the precious Light!
Which he copied from the book that he copied from his own
book(?):
Bihram BrHiia, son of Zakia BrHiia, son of Baktiar, son of Adam Bihram, clan name Kuhailia;
which he copied from a book of the great, lofty and treasured *ganzibra*—may he be blessed!:
Adam Zakia,[77] son of Yahia Yuhana, son of Baktiar BrHiia, son of Adam, son of Sam, son of Abulfaraš, son of Ruzba, son of Adam, son of Sam, clan name Sumaqa, of the tribe (*qina*) ʿKuma;
which he copied (from) the great, lofty, and treasured
R. Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Zihrun, son of Sarwan, clan name Samia(?)—may Manda d̲-Hiia forgive him his sins!
Which he copied from the book of the great, lofty, and treasured (priest)—full of priestly knowledge:
R. Bihram, son of Baktiar Maluha,
who copied from a book that *he* copied—the great, lofty, and
treasured son of a steadfast root:
R. Abulfaraš Quṭana,
which he copied from a book of the great, lofty, and treasured
R. Adam, son of Sam Bayan, clan name Quṭana; which he copied from a book of
R. Yahia Bihram, son of R. Adam, clan name Zarzuia,
from the book of a pure cloud, who is his mother:
Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Zakia Diqnana,
which he copied again—R. (Yahia) Bihram, son of R. Adam Zarzuia—
from a book of
Hawa Mahnuš, daughter of Yahia. (S)he copied from our teacher, who is the *ganzibra*
R. Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan Zarzuia,
from a book of

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[77] From here on, the two colophons only rarely share links of copyists.

R. Šadan, son of Sam Paiiš,
who copied it from
R. Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan Šupartaiia,
which he copied again—R. Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan Šupartaiia—from a book of
Baktiar, son of Yuhana—which he copied (yet) again, R. Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan Šupartaiia—
from the book of Baktiar, son of Yuhana,
which he copied yet again,
R. Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan Šupartaiia,[78]
from that old book that was taught to him (by)
Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad,
(from) a manuscript (*ḳdab ʿda*) of
Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia,
who copied it (from) the son of his mother's sister:
Sam, son of Yahia,
from the book of
Yahia, son of Adam,
and Yahia copied from the book of
Ram Ziwa Bihdad, son of Bayan Hibil,
from the book of his pupil,
Zihrun, son of Sku Hiia.
And he is the teacher who was rejected, because he copied from the people who make magical signs, in the town of Šilurupta. And Zihrun copied (from)
R. Ram Ziwa Bihram,[79] son of Bayan Hibil, from his own book, which he[80] copied from his father,
Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar. And Bayan Hibil copied from the
scroll (*šapta*) of
ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, and ʿQaiam copied from the scroll of
Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, and Bayan Hibil copied from the scroll of
Hibil, son of Gadana,
which was housed in the library of
Šad Manda, son of Sku Yawar. And Hibil copied from the scroll of his father Gadana Nukraya.[81]
Again, these prayers were put in order from the *diwan* of

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[78] R. Bihram Zakia seems to have copied these three long prayers three times.

[79] Error for Bihdad? Or, there may be two initiates: Ram Ziwa Bihram and Ram Ziwa Bihdad, both sons of Bayan Hibil.

[80] Now the colophon links up with colophon 1 and follows it for a little while.

[81] A double circle in the facsimile signals a new section at this point.

Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar and (from) that of
Bainia [i.e., Bainai], son of Zakia,
and (of) Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia.
They copied from the *diwan* of Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, which was housed with
Haiuna, daughter of Yahia.
s—a

10 CP 170: "GOOD IS THE GOOD FOR THE GOOD"

CP 170 begins with the formula *ṭab ṭaba lṭabia*, which refers to the beneficial effects of ritual foods on those for whom the meal is celebrated. The prayer occupies a special position in Mandaeism. Called *Abahatan*, "Our Ancestors," it is the great intercession prayer for the dead. Making a grand sweep across the religon's entire history—mythological as well as "historical" in the more regular sense—the prayer is uttered at all major rituals for the dead. It also occurs in the clusters of rituals for a priest's initiation. In his frequent repetitions of the hope for full-scale salvation, the intoner of the prayer asks that a forgiver of sins be provided for a great number of Light-beings and for a long list of named Mandaeans.

Drower says, "I am inclined to take the whole prayer as a petition to the ancestors that they should help to free, not only the dead person in whose name the rites are performed, but other dead, and the living on earth, from their trespasses, and provide a saviour or looser of sins."[1] She observes that few versions of *CP* 170 correlate with one another.[2] From a historical perspective, this is understandable, as any transcribed *Abahatan* throughout the centuries will take its initial focus from the scribe's own immediate interests and context, for he is concerned with his own soul, the soul of his teacher, and those of the scribe's family members. During the recital of *Abahatan*, "it is customary for those present to suggest names of those for whom they wish to pray, the priest adding them to the list."[3]

In almost shorthand format, *Abahatan* contains both Light-world watchers and Tibil guardians of the religious tradition. Light-beings are enumerated first, and then follow rosters of illustrious priests from the scribal present back to Zazai of Gawazta. As the listed names conjure up all of their bearers, past and present, the prayer itself constitutes a spoken *laufa*, the vital connection between the upper and lower worlds. Every time it is intoned, *Abahatan* collects and recollects the Mandaean tradition within a compressed mythological and historical purview. A scholar's innocent surface reading of the prayer may tend to take the many Lightworld and earthly names alike with a grain of salt, minimizing any historical information hidden behind the human names. But from the perspective of colophon research, *CP* 170 offers a fascinating opportunity to correlate the names of priests in it with those found in colophons. Not the least interesting is the presence of women's names. In this chapter, I start with the *CP*'s version of *Abahatan*, which is the longest I have found, and complement the information in it with briefer forms occurring in other texts: the version in *MHZ*, the one given in De Morgan's so-called "*ʿniana*s," one found in the British Library's *Ginza* Add. 23,601, and, finally, the name list in *DC 42* (*Šarḥ ḏ-Ṭabahata).*

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[1] Drower, *MII*, 218.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 43 n. 5.

ABAHATAN IN THE *CANONICAL PRAYERBOOK*

After the intitial formula, "Good is the good for the good," *CP* 170 embarks on its lists of those in need of a forgiver of sins.[4] Consistently, Drower translates *CP* 170's ever-recurring "forgiver (*šabiq*) of sins" as "forgiveness" of sins, which in my view undermines the prayer's quest for a personal agent as forgiver and intercessor. This is certainly not the same as the more abstract concept of "forgiveness."[5] Throughout the prayer, all the human beings—and some Lightworld ones—are designated by *maṣbuta* names: they are linked to their mothers, not to their fathers/initiators. So, none of the priests are indicated in their initiation relationships. This poses a challenge in correlating priests with their colophon-based names. The consistent use of *maṣbuta* names in *CP* 170 is, however, natural, because we are here dealing with *liturgy*, the context of the named peoples' salvation.

After the beginning formula, the list of ancestors starts. Yušamin, Abatur, and Ptahil are mentioned in relation to their mothers, which is quite uncommon in Mandaean mythology. One may pause to note that these creators indeed *need* a forgiver of sins, while the Great Life, for instance, does not. Twenty-four unnamed *ʿutra*s, "sons of light," are evoked, along with two female Light-world entities—all lacking parental affiliations. Adam, son of Qin,[6] and Eve (without a designated mother) are listed, as is Adam's son Šitil—but not his brothers Hibil and Anuš.

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[4] The prayer occupies Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 151–54 (facsimile p. 199a–h).

[5] In *MII* (see 219–22), Drower rendered the word as "forgiver."

[6] A female underworld figure.

Next come two of the pairs of mythological ancestors surviving primeval destructions: Ram and Rud, who appeared after the world had been consumed by the sword; and Šurbai and Šarhabiʿl, the couple perpetuating the human race after the world-annihilating fire. The Mandaean Noah figure Šum, along with his wife Nuraita, appear right before Yahia Yuhana (John the Baptist), who is linked to his two wives Qinta and Anhar. One notes that Yahia is not listed among human priests or leaders but with the Lightbeings or other mythological ancestors. The three hundred sixty-five[7] Mandaean priests—mercifully unnamed!—who according to the tradition emigrated from Jerusalem toward the rivers of Mesopotamia and beyond conclude this part of *Abahatan*'s list.

Switching to the scribal present, the copyist Adam Yuhana, son of Sam,[8] petitions for a forgiver of sins for his brother, who is the benefactor of the copying. Both men are sons of Mahnuš. Adam Yuhana then names five *tarmida*s: Adam Zihrun, son of Mamania; Yahia Anuš, son of Maliha; Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Hawa Simat; and two other men, Yahia Zihrun and Sam Bihram, sons of Mudalal. The last two seem to be brothers, but also initiator and initiate.[9] Consulting the patterns in other versions of *Abahatan*, I assume that all five *tarmida*s are either contemporary with Adam Yuhana, or priests who lived within the scribe's recent memory.

I cannot with any confidence identify either of the first two men, but Yahia Ram Zihrun, who might very well have been a *tarmida* in 1802 (when Adam Yuhana copied *CP*), is probably one of the priests who perished in the cholera, if he had not already departed to the Lightworld before 1831. In 1815–16, in Qurna, he copied the two scrolls contained in Ms. Syr. G 2 (R), *The Archer* and *The Rue*. In 1818 he did the extraordinary *Dmut Kušṭa* (= Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 12), with the glued-on scroll *Diwan Razia d̠-Abahata (The Scroll of the Secrets of the Ancestors)*, which he copied on the Karka river in 1823. He is also the scribe from whom Yahia Bihram (in 1867) copied *MHZ* (= *DC 50*). When Ram Zihrun copied *The Book of the Zodiac* in the year of the cholera, he used as his model a scroll made by Yahia Ram Zihrun. As late as 1867, Yahia Bihram wrote out *Šarh d̠-Maṣbuta Rabia* ("The Scroll of the Great Baptism") on the basis of Yahia Ram Zihrun's copy.

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[7] "Five" is lacking in Drower's translation (*Canonical Prayerbook*, 152), though the word appears in the facsimile, p. 199b.

[8] See chap. 9 above for Adam Yuhana, the copyist of *CP*.

[9] According to the lineage of Ram Zihrun—cholera survivor and co-worker of Yahia Bihram—Ram Zihrun is the initiate of Sam Bihram, who, in turn, is the initiate of Yahia Zihrun.

One of the two sons of Mudalal, Sam Bihram, the last of the five listed *tarmida*s, is probably none other than the father of Ram Zihrun. Even though he is classified in his son's writings (and elsewhere) as a *ganzibra*, as early as 1802 he might very well still have held the *tarmida* rank. To complicate matters, there is another Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, of the Dihdaria and Sabur lineages, who belongs roughly to the same time period. This Sam Bihram is a *ganzibra* in 1818, according to Yahia Ram Zihrun's postscript to *Dmut Kušṭa*.[10] But the *ganizbra*'s mother's name is Simat, not Mudalal. So, the first Sam Bihram, father of Ram Zihrun, is meant here in *CP* 170. He took over the copying of the British Library *Ginza* Add. 23,599 from Adam Yuhana in the late 1700s.[11]

Turning to *CP* 170's record of *ganzibra*s for whom a forgiver of sins is requested, one finds the staggering number of thirty-two. Three of these are women *ganzibra*s. The list provides an image of remembered Mandaean leadership for nearly eighteen hundred years, from Adam Yuhana in 1802 in Huwaiza to a mythologized King Ardban, who is here given *ganzibra* status. In this way, a continuous *laufa* of luminaries emerges. Despite their great number, many of these names are easily identifiable, the *ganzibra*s being familiar from colophons and other sources.

The first *ganzibra* is the often encountered, Yahia Yuhana, son of Simat. He is famous as the initiator of at least eight novices.[12] At the beginning of *MHZ*,[13] Yahia Bihram (Adam Yuhana's son) states that he copied the text from a manuscript by Yahia Yuhana, whom he identifies as a *ganzibra*. Yahia Yuhana marks the third link in the list of copyists of *The Exorcism* (*qmaha*) *of Hibil Ziwa*, which was written by a *yalufa* named Adam in 1851 and purchased by de Morgan. Also, Yahia Yuhana appears as a scribe of *GR* 15 in the New York *Ginza* in the care of Mr. Nasser Sobbi.

The next *ganzibra* is Zihrun, son of Simat. His father's (i.e., initiator's) name is Adam Yuhana, as is his brother's, which might mean that Zihrun was initiated by his own older brother, Adam Yuhana. This fits with information in Mamoon Aldulaimi's New York *Ginza*, *GR* 15. Adam Yuhana occurs in the other New York *Ginza* and in both of the California ones. In his postscript to *Dmut Kušṭa*, Yahia Ram Zihrun, the artistic *tarmida* listed above, calls Zihrun, son of Simat "a trusty *ganzibra*."

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[10] At that time, says Yahia Ram Zihrun, all Mandaean *ganzibra*s have been put in exile by the authorities. This Sam Bihram is the copyist of *Diw. Nahr.* and of *DMʿL*.

[11] See chap. 4 above. With respect to Sam Bihram, we sometimes find that the two elements of the name are reversed, with creates further complications.

[12] So says Ram Zihrun (Rudolph, *Mandäische 'Diwan der Flüsse'*, 59).

[13] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 30.

Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana (of the Dihdaria and Sabur lineages) occupies the third *ganzibra* slot. Yahia Yuhana is Adam Yuhana's relative, like the first *ganzibra* treated just above. We now see that Sam Bihram is one of the eight novices of this famous initiator. In 1818, Yahia Ram Zihrun attests that Sam Bihram is exiled along with Zihrun and Yahia Yuhana. But in 1802, Adam Yuhaha was mercifully unaware that this calamity would take place. Fourth in the *ganzibra* list is Bihram Šitil, son of Šarat, a priest who belongs in the great-grandfather slot in Ram Zihrun's lineage and who can be dated approximately to 1740.

The next two *ganzibra*s, Zihrun, son of Maliha, and Adam, son of Šadia Maliha, are unidentifiable. Then come two sons of Hawa Mamania: Yahia Bayan and Yahia Bihram. These two, who are probably not brothers,[14] live around 1500 and belong to different initiator lineages. Yahia Bayan is a frequent copyist of *Ginza* manuscripts, and he may be the son of Sam Bihram, Laiit, Diqnana. The time period is that of the scribal confluence in the *Ginza* colophons, as noted elsewhere. Yahia Bihram is described as "a lofty and revered *ganzibra*, a reliable and elect (man) whom the First Life chose,"[15] and he is attested as copyist of *ATŠ*, *CP*, and *Marsh. 691*. The last of these (in the Bodleian Library), a delicate, beautiful leatherbound volume, is the oldest Mandaean manuscript in Europe, created in Huwaiza in 1529.[16]

The next *ganzibra*, Ram Yuhana, son of Mamania, carries a very common name and I cannot find him with certainty, but no. 10, Bayan Zangia, son of Anhar Simat, occurs in another version of *Abahatan*: *Šarḥ ḏ-Ṭabahata* (= *DC 42*). Next comes no. 11, Sam Saiwia, son of Šarat, who is ubiquitous. His name is unique in colophons. The maternal grandson of Bainai, son of Haiuna, Sam Saiwia appears as a copyist only once, so far (in *ATŠ* 2.7), and his fame derives from his pupil Yahia Adam, an ethnarch listed in that category later in *Abahatan*. This ethnarch appears as copyist in many texts, among them *CP*, *ATŠ*, *ARZ*, de Morgan's *Book of Souls*, *DMʿL*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, and *MHZ*.

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[14] Yahia Bihram belongs to the Zakias and Buhairs, not to the Manduias (to which Yahia Bayan belongs, biologically). For the three biological brothers of Yahia Bayan, see chap. 3 below on the California *Ginza*s. These three brothers stayed within their Manduia initiation lineage, while Yahia Bayan did not.

[15] *ATŠ*, 1.1; Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 159 §203.

[16] *Marsh. 691* is treated in chap. 12 below.

Sam Saiwia belongs around the year 800, and he shows up in a clustering of *ganzibra*s in early Islamic times. Of these leaders, few can be identified, but two of them are women listed here in *CP* 170: Hawa, daughter of Daia, and Anhar Kumraita, daughter of Simat. I cannot be certain whether the *ganzibra* Hawa is identical with the copyist Hawa, daughter of Nukraya.[17] Another listed *ganzibra* is Ruzba, son of Hawa, a *GL* scribe and, probably (though without initiator identification), of *DMʿL*.[18] The name Ruzba is relatively rare, but it is a *maṣbuta* name, and there seem to be at least three Ruzbas, all early.

Ganzibra no. 17 in *CP* 170's list is Yahia Ramuia, son of Ramuia (Naṭar).[19] This son of Ramuia is not well attested outside of the blessing formulas in *Abahatan*. The father, Ramuia himself, is a famous ethnarch and copyist. The woman ethnarch Haiuna copied *MHZ* from Yahia Ramuia.[20]

Three unidentifiable *ganzibra*s follow before no. 21, the famous Brik Yawar, son of Buran and Bihdad.[21] In addition to *CP*, the documents *HG* and *ARR*[22] testify to Brik Yawar. He was installed by Anuš-ʿutra at Pumbdit,[23] which was the site of a well-known Jewish academy. Brik Yawar had at least three initiates: Šadan, Banan Bihram, and Bayan Hibil. These three often worked together on *Ginza* manuscripts. Brik Yawar copied *ARR* from Bainai, son of Zakia, but the text at first frightened him, as we have seen (p. 177 above).

Bihram, son of Bišaq, follows in *CP* 170 as *ganzibra* no. 22. Then comes Šabur, son of Dukt, who together with an unnamed great-grandfather of Yahia Yuhana Bihdad, son of Anuš Maʿilia, copied the first part of *CP*. *CP* places Šabur in Mašiun (i.e., Maisan, Mesene). Šabur is a son of Zazai of Gawazta, according to *MHZ*,[24] though this seems doubtful, historically (we probably have on our hands another Šabur).

The next seven *ganzibra*s are difficult to identify. Two sons of Haiuna, named Mhatam and Šitil, are mentioned. The very last one in the entire list of *ganzibra*s is the mythologized Ardban, called "Ardaban King Baktiar, son of Simat." Thus, *Abahatan* includes the Parthian king, the traditional protector of the Mandaeans, with the honored status of the most ancient *ganzibra*.

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[17] See chap. 8 above on women priests.

[18] In the latter text, he shows up in line 1345.

[19] The second part of the father's name occurs in *MHZ*, Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 86.

[20] Ibid.

[21] For Brik Yawar, see chap. 9 above.

[22] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 10; *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 52.

[23] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 10; see chap. 15 below for interpretation.

[24] I, 86.

Having arrived at the end of the record of *ganzibra*s, the scribe Adam Yuhana repeats the phrase asking for a forgiver of sins for "all our good ancestors." Next, he offers the very last list: the ethnarchs. In *CP*'s version of *Abahatan*, their number is nine, and they are all well-known luminaries. First comes Adam Abulfaraš, son of Hawa Mamania. *DMʿL* designates him "head of the people" and "head of the age,"[25] which proves him to be a supreme leader. This is the man who, according to legend,[26] defeated a Zoroastrian magician with his own Mandaean powers. Attested several times in *CP*, Adam Abulfaraš occurs as a scribe also in the colophons of *Sfar M.*, *MHZ*, *ARR*, *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, and *DMʿL*.

The next ethnarch is Anuš Muʿalia, son of Hawa Zadia. He has a son with the same name as himself (an unusual occurrence). The son of Anuš Bihdad, another ubiquitous copyist, Anuš Muʿalia appears numerous times in the *Ginza* and in *CP* and is also a scribe of *ATŠ* and *Sfar M.*

Yahia Adam, son of Zadia,[27] is the only one aside from Adam Abulfaraš who in *DMʿL* carries the double epithet "head of the people" and "head of the age." His initiator is Sam Saiwia, known from the list of *ganzibra*s. Yahia Adam himself shows up as copyist in *ATŠ*, *ARZ*, *DMʿL*, de Morgan's *Sidra ḏ-Nišmata*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, and *MHZ*. When Adam Abulfaraš copied *DMʿL*, he performed the work not once but twice, and one of his copying tasks was based on a manuscript belonging to Yahia Adam.

Bihdad, son of Šadia and of Zihrun, occupies the slot of the fourth ethnarch. So far, I find Bihdad as a scribe of four texts: *ARZ*, *ZRK*,[28] *MHZ*, and *Dmut Kušṭa*. The last text has Yahia Adam, the immediately preceding ethnarch, copying from a manuscript by Bihdad. Next in *CP* 170 comes Bainai, son of Haiuna. Both mother and son are ethnarchs and joint library owners. Who Haiuna's husband might be is not revealed. Bainai has as his initiator his own brother, Zakia, and Bainai is attested in *ATŠ*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, *MHZ*, and *ZRK*, and *CP* mentions him several times. As the earliest scribe of *ZRK*, Bainai may even be the original author of it. *ARZ* states that Bainai is the maternal grandfather of Yahia (Sam) Adam,[29] ethnarch no. 3.

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[25] *DMʿL*, line 1347.

[26] *MII*, 292–99.

[27] The text seems corrupt here, for it continues with the words "Anuš and Hawa" (Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook,* facsimile p. 199g).

[28] *DC 27: Masiqta Zihrun Raza Kasia* ("Zihrun the Great Mystery").

[29] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 90.

Now we see that three priests—Bihdad (the fourth ethnarch, treated just above), the ethnarch Yahia (Sam) Adam, and the latter's initiator, the *ganzibra* Sam Saiwia—are all grandsons of Bainai.

The parents of Haiuna, who is the only woman ethnarch in Mandaeism, are indicated as Tihwia and Yahia.[30] Together with her son Bainai, she owned *DMʿL* and *ATŠ* (= *DC 36*). She marks the end of *CP*'s colophon 2, at the close of the three long prayers *CP* 75–77. This colophon appoints her as owner of this part of *CP*. She made many copies of *ARZ*, says that text.[31] Aside from these attestations, Haiuna is mentioned as copyist in *MHZ* and in *Dmut Kušṭa*.

The next-to-last ethnarch, Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, can be dated around 638, based on his statement that 368 years have passed since Zazai of Gawazta's copy of *CP* 1–74.[32] The ethnarch Ramuia is very rarely referred to in relation to his father/initiator, who is either Bayan Hibil or Zihrun Naṭar (depending on the source).[33] Ramuia almost always copies from documents transcribed by Zazai of Gawazta, and, like Haiuna and Bainai, Ramuia belongs in the city of Ṭib, the Mandaean scribal center. *ATŠ*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, *ZRK*, and *MHZ* attest to Ramuia as copyist.

The very last listed ethnarch is, of course, Zazai of Gawazta himself, son of Hawa and Naṭar. Zazai's older brother Anuš is also designated son of Naṭar. Zazai is frequently said to copy from the First Life, and sometimes he has Manda d̲-Hiia or Hibil ʿutra as his mythologized father. Datable around 270 and installed as a leader in Baghdad by Anuš-ʿutra,[34] Zazai belongs among the very first Mandaean scribes, although *GL* does attest to scribes before his time, as we have seen. In *GL*, Zazai's son/initiate Ṭabia ("gazelle") appears as copyist, while Zazai himself does not. Aside from the sources mentioned, Zazai is also attested in *ATŠ*, *DMʿL*, *MHZ*, *ZRK*, *ARZ*, and *Dmut Kušṭa*.

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[30] *MHZ* (Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 86), gives Haiuna's father's name as Yahia Yuhana.

[31] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 90.

[32] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71.

[33] *MHZ*, (Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 44), has Zihrun Naṭar.

[34] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 10.

With this, I have come to the end of the list of names in *CP* 170. Next, I turn to other instances of the *Abahatan* prayer.

THE EVIDENCE FROM *MAṢBUTA D̲-HIBIL ZIWA*

The cholera survivor Yahia Bihram copied *MHZ* in Qurna in 1831.[35] The text spells out parts of the mythological traditions about Hibil Ziwa, delineates the procedure for the *maṣbuta*, and presents the primordial baptism as it was first performed in the Lightworld. Yahia Bihram copies from his father's scroll, Adam Yuhana's. His father admits that at its beginning the scroll is missing part of the text, but the son faithfully transcribes what there is.[36]

The equivalent of *Abahatan* here in *MHZ* is very short,[37] as it enumerates no *tarmida*s or *ganzibra*s. Throughout, it bears a peculiar feature: the designations are "patrilineal" and by initiation, not *maṣbuta*, names. So, starting with the Lightworld beings Yušamin, Abatur, Habšaba, and so on, all are related to their fathers, as are the early human ancestors. Yahia Bihram asks for a forgiver of sins for himself and for his named relatives, very few of whom survived the cholera. In one gesture, he begs for a forgiver of sins for Mandaeans, *tarmida*s, *ganzibra*s, and heads of the age and of the people. Perhaps the task of naming as many as in *CP* would simply be intolerable in view of the recent catastrophe.

However, the list of ethnarchs is virtually identical to *CP*'s, though the ethnarchs are helpfully identified in terms of initiation relationships. *MHZ* follows *CP*'s list, but it inserts Yahia Ramuia, son of Ramuia, after Haiuna. Šabur, a son of Zazai of Gawazta, is the last one, no. 10. Oddly, Zazai himself remains unlisted as ethnarch. The lineage is: "Šabur, son of Zazai of Gawazta, son of Manda d̲-Hiia."[38] This ends the list. Without pause, Yahia Bihram immediately proceeds to the directions for the baptism ritual.

DE MORGAN'S *'NIANIA* VERSION

Under complex circumstances, which he shrouds in secrecy, the scholar J. de Morgan acquired Mandaean manuscripts while he traveled in Persia in

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[35] For Yahia Bihram and his postscripts in *MHZ*, see chap. 7 above.

[36] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 30.

[37] Ibid., 43–44.

[38] Ibid., 44.

1889–91.[39] One of them is the so-called— though mislabeled—set of "responses" (*ʿniania*), which were reworked by the *tarmida* Yahia Yuhana, son of Sam, in Muhammerah on Šatt al-Arab, in 1833. Like other newly minted priests after the 1831 cholera, Yahia Yuhana adheres to his own biological lineage. Yahia Bihram and Ram Zihrun do the same, as we have seen, as do some priests of the Manduia clan.

Yahia Yuhana completes his task two years after Yahia Bihram, in Qurna, copied *MHZ*, which contains the very abbreviated version of *Abahatan*. Yahia Yuhana produced his copy by basing it on an older one, from 1783, a text that via dramatic circumstances finally returned to its real home in Amara.[40] Missing much material and consisting of prayers that are not strictly *ʿniana*s at all, the text is a garbled piece. Judging by the order of prayers, I take the document to reflect a jumbled ritual sequence. De Morgan could not have known precisely what he had acquired, as he did not read Mandaic.

Despite its shortcomings, Yahia Yuhana's spurious *ʿniana* collection does contain a version of *Abahatan*.[41] The Lightworld denizen list is identical to that of *CP*. In addition, the recurrent formulas appear in the same spots as before. The copyist, Yahia Yuhana, son of Maliha, begs for a forgiver of sins for himself, for his relatives, and for his teacher, Sam, son of Hawa Simat. He names ten laypeople, repeats the recurrent formula about "our good ancestors," and then starts listing the *tarmida*s. There are six of them, three of whom are also in *CP*, which only listed five *tarmida*s. Yahia Ram Zihrun, the *Dmut Kušṭa* copyist, is one of the six. But Yahia Yuhana makes no mention of the two sons of priests who rescued the religion in 1831, Yahia Bihram and his cousin and brother-in-law Ram Zihrun. Perhaps this omission is due to the unorthodox manner in which the two men became priests.

The *ganzibra*s in this text are eight, a small number when compared to the more than thirty in *CP*'s *Abahatan*. De Morgan's manuscript roughly adheres to *CP* with regard to the first six *ganzibra*s but then skips to *CP*'s nos. 29–31. However, the list of "heads of the people" follows *CP*'s exactly. Throughout, the *maṣbuta* name pattern rules, as in *CP*—but opposed to *MHZ*.

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[39] See my "Study of the Two Liturgical Collections."

[40] For details, see ibid.

[41] De Morgan, *Textes Mandaïtes*, 87–95.

ŠARH D̠-ṬABAHATA: *DC 42*

The unpublished text *Šarh d̠-Ṭabahata* is the oldest one in which I have found the prayer of intercession.[42] The document dates to 1743, when Ram Yuhana, son of Ram (Dihdaria and Sabur lineages), copied the text in Šuštar. In that same year, he also completed the artistically demanding *Diw. Ab.* Ten years later, Ram Yuhana copied the two Bodleian Library *JB*s; he is a *Ginza* scribe, too (*DC 22*).

In *DC 42*, the list of Lightworld beings, identified by their *maṣbuta* names, are the same as before. Ram Yuhana distinguishes between his father and his teacher, but because Ram seems to be the name of both his father and his teacher slot in the lineage, it is difficult to understand the presence of another listed teacher: Adam Zihrun, son of Mamania. (Perhaps the two, Ram and Adam Zihrun, were co-teachers). Adam Zihrun may be the first *tarmida* in *CP* 170's record, for the mother of Adam Zihrun here is Mamania. In terms of time period, it makes sense to identify *CP* 170's Adam Zihrun with the one in *DC 42*. Moreover, both copyists—Adam Yuhana of *CP* and Ram Yuhana of *DC 42*—wrote in Šuštar, though they belong to different lineages and families. Fifty-nine years separate their copying activities: 1743 to 1802. But Adam Yuhana of *CP* was active as a copyist (of *Pašar Haršia*) already in 1782.

Ram Yuhana makes repeated use of the phrase "as much as you are able, pray for a forgiver of sins for the souls of Mandaeans, *tarmida*s, and *ganzibra*s." This shows some elasticity in the enumerations of named priests, an encouragement to other officials to add names to the lists. However, Ram Yuhana records no *tarmida*s but goes straight to the *ganzibra*s. There are thirty of them.

The first, Sam Šitil,[43] son of Anhar, and the fifth, Yahia, son of Hawa Buran, are to me unidentifiable. But the second *ganzibra*, Sam Adam, son of Buran, is known as a "father of *ganzibra*s"—that is, he initiated at least two priests who later achieved *ganzibra* status. Found in *Šarh d̠-Qabin* and in *CP*'s fifth colophon,[44] Sam Adam does not belong among the copyists of either document but is instead identified in relation to one of his initiates. This man became a famed *ganzibra*, Yahia Mhatam. He and his brother Sam Yuhana had the same initiator, Sam Adam. These are Manduias, ʿKumas. Sam

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[42] It is found in lines 607–60 of the manuscript.

[43] There is a man by this name in *Sfar M.* (Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 156), but he lives too early to be the person named here.

[44] Drower, *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, 11–12; Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 170.

Adam, by initiation a son of Zakia, copied both of the *Diw. Nahr.* manuscripts treated by Kurt Rudolph.[45] Moreover, examining the colophon of Museo Borgiano's *Diw. Ab.* manuscript, I found that Sam Adam is its scribe. The text was purchased by the Carmelite R.P. Ignatius in 1622 and brought to Rome.[46] It has no date, but we at least know that it predates 1622, which would fit with an estimated time for Sam Adam.

The third *ganzibra* in *DC 42*'s list is Mhatam Zihrun, son of Anhar Hawa and member of the Kuhailia clan, is well attested as a copyist of *ATŠ*, *CP*, de Morgan's *Book of Soul*s, *ARZ*, and *JB*. Indeed, he made his copy of *JB* by using a text owned by "his pure spouse," the priest Yasmin Mudalal, daughter of Adam Bihram of the Zarzuia clan. Both husband and wife are listed as scribes in the Paris *JB*'s *Mss. A* and *B*, for example.

Adam Zakia, son of Mariuaria, comes next. I have not found Adam Zakia (who is a son of Yahia Yuhana) as copyist outside of *CP*. Mariuaria may be the woman priest of the same name—the time period would fit. But this is by no means certain, for Mariuaria is a *maṣbuta* name. The last listed *ganzibra* is Yahia Sam, son of Hawa Mamania. A familiar copyist of both sides of the *Ginza*, of *ARR*, *ARZ*, *Diw. Ab.*, and *Diw. Nahr.*, Yahia Sam, together with his father-in-law, Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, was a famous priest and scribe. Yahia Sam's younger brother was a priest, too: Adam Bahran, son of Zakia Mašhadia. All are familiar from previous chapters.

Ram Yuhana then returns to the recurring formula, asking for a forgiver of sins for his own soul and that of his teacher. The ethnarch inventory is exactly the same as in *CP*, in precise order.

THE BRITISH LIBRARY *GINZA* ADD. 23,601

Written for Colonel Taylor in 1824—seven years before the cholera—the *Ginza* Add. 23,601 copy stems from our friend Adam Yuhana, son of Sam.[47] Right before *GL*, a reader will find a prefixed leaf, in a slightly smaller folio format and in a different handwriting than the *Ginza*. On this leaf is a familiar-looking roster of names, beginning with Ardban Malka Baktiar, son of Simat. He was the last of the *ganizbra*s in *CP* 170. Eschewing any differentiation between *tarmida*s, *ganzibra*s, and ethnarchs, the roster has thirty-one names in all. All are known from other texts. Compared to that of *CP* 170, the list goes in the opposite direction.

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[45] Rudolph, *Der Mandäische 'Diwan der Flüsse'*, pp. 59–60.

[46] See Drower's preface to *Diwan Abatur*, iii.

[47] See chap. 4 above.

At times, the appended leaf in Add. 23,601 is the more complete. Hurmuzdukt, son of Hawa Zadia, and Anuš, son of Buran, do not appear in *CP* 170, but here they do (they were also in *DC 42*). Only one person is listed by patronym: Yahia Ramuia, son of Ramuia. In the tenth slot, counted from the start of *CP* 170's listed *ganzibra*s, one finds Bayan Zangia, son of Anhar Simat. The British Library's *Ginza* Add. 23,601 stops with this man, and the word "*saka*" appears. In *DC 42*'s version, it was precisely at this spot that the *ganzibra* list began to intersect with that of *CP* 170.

Without any indication of the beginning of the ethnarch list, we then find the usual nine names, but with Zazai of Gawazta first, Adam Abulfaraš last.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Why *CP* 170 lists no ethnarchs after the time of Adam Abulfaraš is a question so far unanswerable. Nowadays, any *ganzibra* who initiates seven or more priests automatically becomes a "*riš ama*."[48] Perhaps this is a fairly recent idea.

Let me make a few points regarding the five lists' striking consistency in the record of the nine ethnarchs. First, it is extremely suggestive that these nine leaders—who are for the most part unattested as *Ginza* copyists—tend to appear as scribes of texts such as *CP*, *DMʿL*, *ATŠ*, *Dmut Kušṭa*, *ZRK*, *MHZ*, and *ARZ*. Scholars of Mandaeism traditionally relegate most of these documents[49] to a later, nonclassical era and tend to judge them as degenerate, in terms of language and content, as compared to the "pristine" Mandaean teachings found in the *Ginza*, for example.

That six of the listed texts are esoteric ritual commentaries and exegeses leads to my second point, which is that the ethnarchs are attested as liturgy commentators. This means that they copy literature that presupposes the "classical," foundational Mandaean texts. But the character of these texts—(often disparaged) esoteric commentaries—with their attendant lofty scribal "pedigrees," necessitates a renewed examination of Mandaean textual and religious history. For, according to their colophons, the documents mentioned are indeed far older than all of *GR*, of the entire *JB*, and a large part of *CP*. These preliminary conclusions have far-reaching consequences, to be examined in chapters 13 and 14.

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[48] In recent decades, there has been a veritable slew of priest initiations in Iraq. Until very recently Sh. Abdullah, son of Sh. Negm, was the "head of the people." The present head priest in Baghdad is Sh. Sattar, in exile at present.

[49] Except for *CP*.

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To conclude this chapter, I provide a correlation showing the ethnarch (*riš ama*) lists in *CP* 170 and in *MHZ*. Because de Morgan's version of listed ethnarchs follows *CP* 170 completely, I have not included it; neither do I show the roster in the British Library's source, as it is the reverse of *CP* 170. *DC 42* follows *CP* 170 very closely. Finally, *ARR* has an abbreviated *Abahatan*, with no human names, except for that of John the Baptist).[50]

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[50] Drower, *Pair of Naṣorean Commentaries*, 28.

Correlation of the Ethnarch Lists in *CP* 170 and *MHZ*

CP 170	**MHZ**
Adam Abulfaraš,	Adam Abulfaraš,
s. of Hawa Mamania	s. of Bihram Šitil
Anuš Maʿilia,	Anuš Maʿilia,
s. of Hawa Zadia	s. of Bihdad
Yahia Adam,	Yahia Adam,
s. of Zadia	s. of Sam Saiwia
Anuš (-)	
Hawa[51]	———[52]
Bihdad,	Bihdad,
s. of Šadia Šarat	s. of Zihrun
Bainia,	Bainai,
s. of Haiuna	s. of Zakia
Haiuna,	Haiuna,
d. of Tihwia	s.[53] of Yahia
———	Yahia Ramuia,
	s. of Ramuia
Ramuia,	Ramuia,
s. of ʿQaimat	s. of Zihrun Naṭar
Šganda,	Šganda,
s. of Yasmin	s. of Yahia Yuhana
	Šabur,
———	s. of Zazai of Gawazta,
	s. of Manda d̲-Hiia
Zazai of Gawazta,	
s. of Hawa	

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[51] Corrupt; Yahia Adam and Anuš are conflated.

[52] ——— means “not present.”

[53] Error.

11 THE BOOK OF JOHN

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

In his introduction to the *Johannesbuch* (1915), Lidzbarski says that this collection of Mandaean texts was probably intended as a supplement to the *Ginza*. Also known under the name *Drašia d̲-Malkia* ("The Teachings of Kings"), *JB* may have been renamed in order to honor John the Baptist, who is revered by Muslims. The *Ginza*, too, has an alternative name: *The Book of Adam*, a title that likewise might have been invented to impress the Muslims. Most scholars hold *JB* to belong to a post-Islamic stage. But there is no reason to view the whole of *JB* as stemming from a late literary period, for much of the material in it is old, especially the moral teachings and the mythologies. It seems that only segments of *JB* belong to the eighth century or later.[1]

Lidzbarski gave the text thirty-seven tractates, with titles, and seventy-six chapters. These tractate divisions do not exist in the original manuscripts. *JB* may have acquired its name because of the long tractate 6, which focuses on John the Baptist. Each chapter here—19–33—begins with the enigmatic formula "Yahia preached in the nights; Yuhana in the dusk of the night." One notes that the poetic phrase retains both the Arabic and the Aramaic forms of John's name.

Few Western scholars study *JB* seriously, and the book enjoys much more esteem among Mandaeans than among those scholars. In Ahwaz, Iran, in October 1973, I was allowed to see and handle Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi's copy of the book incised on lead. I suspect that this may be the only lead *JB* in existence. No English translation of *JB* has yet appeared. In Lidzbarski's edition, his own talent for excellent calligraphy is evident in the facsimile part of the book, which contains Lidzbarski's handwritten Mandaic. In recent centuries, at least, *JB* is always a codex, not in scroll form. Colophons often refer to it as a *kurasa*, a loose-leaf manuscript, or as a *sidra*, a book.

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[1] For an assessment of *JB*'s texts and traditions, see my "Re-Investigation of *The Book of John*."

ABOUT THE COLOPHONS

Seven of the eight *JB* colophons that I have studied share many features, despite the time differences of the consulted *JB* copies. At first, the colophons seemed so suspiciously similar that it was tempting to draw facile historical conclusions about direct dependencies in all *JB* colophons. But things were not quite so simple. The next-to-youngest *JB* manuscript, from Naṣiriyah, 1922, shows very different lineages than the others. This copy of *JB* stems from Sh. Dakhil (baptismal name: Mhatam Zihrun), Lamea Abbas Amara's maternal uncle.

Lidzbarski used four documents, three of which are in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. *Ms. A* comes from Khalafabad on the Šaharia (now called Abu Hanyour) river in Khuzistan, 1629, by copyist Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil, of the Quṭana clan. *Ms. B* stems from the scribe Zihrun, son of Adam, of the Faraš and ʿKuma clans, from Mina (the habor area of Basra), 1617. *Ms. C* was written in 1690 by the *yalufa* Adam Zihrun, son of Mhatam (Ram Ziwa family). Like *Ms. A*'s scribe, he too resided on the Šaharia river, but in the town Doraq (now Shadegan). *Ms. D* is not from Paris but from the Bodleian Library, Oxford, where its title is *Hunt. 71* (I refer to it by this name). This manuscript stems from Basra, 1658, copied by Adam, son of Sam, of the Ram Ziwa family. One may note that all of the manuscripts are from the seventeenth century.

Then we have Bodleian's *DC 30*, from Šuštar, 1753, by Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, Dihdaria and Sabur clans. Lidzbarski, of course, died too early to know of this document. Lady Drower bought the book from Sheikh Negm in November 1937. In addition to Lamea Abbas Amara's 1922 copy of *JB*, there is a second one owned by a Mandaean in the United States: Mr. Nasser Sobbi's book from 1910, from the town of Amara on the Tigris, by Mhatam, son of Yahia Bihram, Kamisia and Riš Draz families. Mhatam's initator is Yahia Bihram, of 1831 fame, and this particular pupil of Yahia Bihram is not otherwise attested in my colophon studies so far.

Finally, I have consulted a photocopy of an Iranian *JB* that was finished in 1991 in Ahwaz, Iran, by the *yalufa* Bayan, son of Šarat. His regular name is Sheikh Salem Choheili, and he was Rudolf Macuch's chief informant in his investigations on modern spoken Mandaic.[2] Dr. Sinan Abdullah, of Niskayuna, New York, owns this photocopy of *JB*.

Zazai of Gawazta does not appear in any *JB* colophon. The earliest scribe (in most of the colophons) is Sku Hiia, and he can be dated to early Islamic times, to the era of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Unlike the postscripts in many other Mandaean texts, none of the *JB* colophons assert that Sku Hiia obtained the book from the highest authorities, such as the Great Life itself. Sku Hiia remains unattested in colophons outside of *JB*, though in Lamea's copy he does not appear at all. Only in three *GR* manuscripts (*B*, *C*, and *D*) does Haiašum ("name of Life"), a pupil of Sku Hiia, turn up as a scribe.

The sections in this chapter are as follows: first, I deal with the colophons in Paris *Ms. B* and *DC 30*, then with those of *Ms. A* and of *Hunt. 71*. Paris *Ms. C* is not treated separately, for reasons given below. Then come a treatment of the three *JB*s in the United States, before some concluding remarks. A small appendix correlates parts of the seven colophons.

PARIS *MS. B* AND *DC 30*

The oldest text is Paris *Ms. B*, from 1617. The scribe, Zihrun, of the Paraš and ʿKuma clans, is not attested elsewhere so far. He only wrote the first sixteen pages and the last four, and the rest of the manuscript is older, says Lidzbarski.[3] Zihrun copies for the benefit of a pious craftsman, Sadan, and the book he used comes from a man named Gandil, who evidently is a layman. Gandil has no priestly names in his lineage, except for the very last one, Adam, nicknamed Taumia ("twins").[4] The next lineage, Ganim's, has a few priest names. Only with the third copyist lineage do we arrive at a familiar name: Adam, son of Sam. He is the copyist of *Hunt. 71*, in 1658. Forty-one years separate *Ms. B* from *Hunt. 71*. Both works were done in Basra.

Yahia Mhatam, son of Sam Adam (the latter is "a father of *ganzibra*s") is the next link, and his is the second familiar name in the colophon. We are dealing with Manduias here. A prolific copyist, Yahia Mhatam is recorded as a scribe of *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, *CP*, *Hunt. 6*, *DC 30*, the Australian *Ginza*, and Mr. Sobbi's *JB*. His scribal predecessor is his brother, Sam Yuhana, and the two have identical lineages. Both are initiated by their brother: Sam Adam, as we saw in chapter 3.[5] One other lineage appears before we reach another recognizable scribe: Baktiar, son of Adam Mhatam. Baktiar is attested in *Diw. Nahr.*, *DC 30*, and Mr. Sobbi's *JB* (Baktiar worked together with his brother Sam Bayan in assembling a fragmented manuscript of the Baghdad *Diw. Nahr.*).

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[2] See Macuch, *NeumandäischeTexte im Dialekt von Ahwaz*.

[3] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, viii.

[4] Or this may be a clan name.

At this point, I stop following Lidzbarski's *Ms. B* and instead turn to *DC 30* from Šuštar. The reason is that the similarities between the two colophons become evident at Yahia Mhatam, Manduia. *DC 30* was copied in 1753 by the excellent calligrapher Ram Yuhana, son of Ram (Dihdaria and Sabur clans). He is known for the forty-eight-foot-long illustrated *Diw.Ab.* (= *DC 8*), which he copied in 1743, ten years before he did *DC 30* (he also copied *Šarh ḏ-Ṭabahata* in 1743). Ram Yuhana copies for a female client, Mamania, daughter of craftsman Maqsud, and he used the book of the woman priest Mamul Dihgan, whom we have met before as a *Ginza* copyist. In fact, Ram Yuhana has copied from one of Mamul Dihgan's books already, in another context. That book was attested in the colophon of the 1802 *Ginza*, *DC 22*, in which Mamul Dihgan is lauded as "a pure cloud, pious and straight," generous with offerings.

One other link intervenes before we reach Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, of the Kuhailia clan. Yahia Yuhana is ubiquitous a copyist: for instance, in de Morgan's *ʿniania*, *HG*, the *Ginza*, *Šarh ḏ-Ṭabahata*, *Diw. Nahr.*, Ms. Syr F 2 (R), and Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 13.[6] In *DC 30*, Yahia Yuhana copied from his father, Ram. The next link is Yahia Mhatam, som of Sam Adam, whom we have seen in Lidzbarski's *Ms. B*.

Now, as noted, the lineages in *Ms. B* and *DC 30* start to follow one another. However, one person is missing from Lidzbarski's *Ms. B* but present in *DC 30*. This is Zakia Bayan, son of Yuhana Šapuria, who consults no fewer than four manuscripts (*kurasa*s). The first one is co-owned by Sam Yuhana ʿAsikir and Adam ʿAsikir. But only in *Ms. B* is the *kurasa* identified as co-owned; it is not so in *DC 30*. Of the three other consulted *kurasa*s, one belongs to Adam Šitlan, son of (Ram) Yuhana Sukar (Adam Šitlan and his initiator are present as scribes in *Hunt. 71*). The third *kurasa* is owned by the well-known Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar (Durakia clan), copyist of *ATŠ*, *Ms. B* of the *Ginza*, *ARR*, and *Hunt. 6*. Finally, the fourth one is Adam, son of Anuš, ʿKuma. In *ARR*, we find scribal links between the copyist Zakia Bayan and two of the *kurasa* owners: Adam Šitlan, son of Ram Yuhana, and Yahia Saiar, son of Adam Baktiar.[7]

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[5] See the section on the Flushing *Ginza*.

[6] Yahia Yuhana belongs to a lineage discussed in detail in chap. 12 below.

The famous Bihram BrHiia (the elder) appears very soon after the four *JB*s consulted by Zakia Bayan here in *DC 30*. The woman priest Yasmin Mudalal is conspicuously absent in *DC 30*, but she appears in other *JB* manuscripts. After Yahia Adam, son of Šaiar (error for: "Baktiar"), we find six other scribes before arriving at ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Together with Bayan Hibil, he copied from Sku Hiia, the last copyist in *DC 30*—and in almost all other *JB* manuscripts.

DC 30's scribe, Ram Yuhana, identifies the governor of Šuštar as Saiid Faršia, and the times are chaotic. "There is no rulership in the world," he states. Indeed, in the year 1753 the Zands rule Persia, with at least two nominal heads operating at the same time. Persecution is rampant, with "the sons of the evil age" imposing mistreatments on the Mandaeans "every day and every hour," says Ram Yuhana.

PARIS *MS. A* AND *HUNT. 71*

I turn briefly to *Ms. A*, copied in 1629 by Adam Zihrun, son of Zakia Šitil (Quṭana), son of Ram Baktiar. (As we have seen in chapter 2, Ram Baktiar enjoys fame as the *Ginza Ms. A* copyist, in 1560, in Huwaiza—this is the oldest *Ginza* in Europe). Adam Zihrun, grandson of Ram Baktiar, completes the copying of *JB* in Khalafabad, on the Šaharia river, in his own courtyard. He appeals for support from the triumvirate Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš in order to combat "the sons of the evil age." Such formulaic statements are familiar from other postscripts. In Persia, the rulers are the Safavids, with Safi I commencing his reign in the year of Adam Zihrun's copying task. But the Mandaean priest offers no details on the political situation.

Adam Zihrun copies *JB* for "the son of his uncle," the craftsman Bulbul, son of Baktiar. The alternative name of the beneficiary is given as Mhatam, son of Yahia Baktiar. Adam Zihrun's copy is based on that belonging to Adam Paraš, who is responsible for the magnificent *Hunt. 6*, the 1615 *Ginza* copied on Basra's harbor-channel, ʿAšar.[8] The predecessor to Adam Paraš's *JB* was one owned by a craftsman, Matrud,[9] son of Baktiar. At Matrud, the lineage in *Ms. A* begins to follow that of *Hunt. 71*. Matrud's

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[7] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 51.

[8] See chap. 3 above.

[9] Matrud is a lay name.

father Baktiar is also known by the name Adam Yuhana, a name that distinguishes him from his namesake, the just-mentioned (Yahia) Baktiar, whose son is Mhatam. So, we have: Craftsman Bulbul (= Mhatam), son of Baktiar (= Yahia Baktiar), and Matrud, son of Baktiar (= Adam Yuhana), son of Yahia Baktiar. In the last-mentioned segment, we see three generations.

It is necessary to be clear about this distinction between the Baktiars, because we are dealing with men in the same lineage, of the Quṭana clan, in the early seventeenth century. Matrud copied from a *kurasa* (loose-leaf manuscript) of "his older brother in truth,"[10] the lofty *ganzibra* Mhatam, son of Adam Bulbul. The two "brothers," Matrud and Mhatam, do not share the same lineage: one is a layman and the other a *ganzibra*. "Brother in truth" is a technical expression of honorary, not biological, brother relationship.

A *sidra* (book) belonging to the priest Yahia, son of Sarwan Bayan, preceded the *ganzibra* Mhatam's copy. But Yahia's book, in turn, depended on a *kurasa* belonging to the copyist of the earliest manuscript in a European library, Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan. In 1529, a hundred years before his namesake copied the manuscript currently under discussion, *Ms. A* of *JB*, Adam Zihrun copied *Marsh. 691*, the collection of prayers treated already.[11] We know that Adam Zihrun of *Marsh. 691* was active as a scribe as late as 1564.

This colophon, to *JB Ms. A*, switches its terminology from *kurasa* to *sidra* and back to *kurasa* again, within three adjacent generations of scribes. Why? I doubt that *JB*'s format is "fluid" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But if I am mistaken, it may mean that at this late date, the contents of *JB* are not yet "set," but possibly open-ended.

A surprise awaits the reader of this colophon, for Adam Zihrun delivers a long and extraordinarly personal postscript, starting on p. 285 of *JB*.[12] He begins, "Again, know (this), oh brothers who are coming after us! I am a son of a widow of the town of Doraq, and I am a captive in the prisons of the world. And I am unwise." The writer feels powerless, and he admits to having committed much foolishness and to being ignorant about what is beneficial for himself. Then, rescue from ignorance comes in the form of a *ganzibra* of the Manduia clan (this *ganzibra* also brings Adam Zihrun a wife).

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[10] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, Mandaic text, p. 280 line 4.

[11] See chap. 9 above.

[12] At times, the text is difficult to understand. Lidzbarski translates neither postscript nor any colophon in *JB*.

The *ganzibra* says to Adam Zihrun, "Brother! Your work does not ascend to the Life." This means that Adam Zihrun's rituals are performed wrongly and therefore remain ineffective, unfit for acceptance in the World of Light. If he will rectify his mistakes, the *ganzibra* says, the watchers in the *maṭarta*s will not stand in his way, and the road to the Light will be unobstructed.

Adam Zihrun pleads for instruction from the *ganzibra*, and the priest concedes, teaching him the correct prayers and formulas. But then he has to go away for seven months. Another teacher appears, a *tarmida* named Yahia, son of Adam, who is "from our community." Whether this means that the *tarmida* is a local person is hard to say. In any case, Adam Zihrun learns from him. Among other lessons, Yahia admonishes Adam Zihrun, "Do not eat the oil of the Muslims, and there will be mercy. "Adam Zihrun wants to learn the alphabet and to read better. But his attitude is not correct, and he speaks ill-considered words (which he obviously regrets). He does not appear to understand the *Ginza* in the right way.

Neither is his brother well-informed. The visiting *tarmida* commands, "Bring me paper and your confused brother, and write the Sidra d̲-Nišmata for me!" Now the training begins, and small quantities of paper are brought for the writing of the *Book of John*. But the most extraordinary aspect of this postscript is that Adam Zihrun says, "'And we wrote it with the engraving tool of metalworkers." They work, a little at a time, some lines before nightfall, and then on Sunday, Habšaba. The small pieces of paper indicate that they are writing a "rough draft," so to speak, before committing the text to metal. My question is: As the men are using engraving tools, could the text they produce be the lead copy of *JB* that I saw in Ahwaz in 1973? I would need to consult the postscript in the metal book to see whether this might be the case.

Like the first teacher, the *tarmida* also has to leave, going to Basra. Adam Zihrun is upset when the *tarmida* departs, as he longs for further teachings. Then the teacher returns, with a *ganzibra*, and instructs the two brothers in the rest of the *Ginza*, says the postscript. Adam Zihrun ends his description with a beautiful phrase: "How short and rose-colored are the evenings, how short! And Habšaba, how short!"

In Paris *Ms. C*, from 1690, the scribe Adam Zihrun's list of scribes converges almost immediately with that of the others, and therefore *Ms. C* is not treated here. Lidzbarski observes that *Mss. A*, *C*, and *Hunt. 71* all connect at Matrud, son of Baktiar. *Ms. C* depends directly on *Ms. A*, less so on *Hunt. 71*.[13] *Ms. C* stems from Doraq, the home village of the widowed mother of the ill-tempered, but repentant and instruction-needy *tarmida* Adam Zihrun, the copyist of *Ms. A*.

I now switch to the colophon in *Hunt. 71*, which closely follows that of *Ms. A* from the scribe Matrud, son of Baktiar, on. *Hunt. 71* dates to 1658, and it stems from Basra's harbor channel ʿAsar. Two hundred thirty-six pages long, the book is enclosed in a dark oxblood-colored cover and carries a beautiful, even script. Adam, son of Sam (of the Ram Ziwa clan), the copyist, calls it a *kurasa*, which probably means that it has been put into codex form at a later stage. Adam must have been old when he did the copying, for in 1617 he was scribal link no. 3 in Paris *Ms. B*, from Mina. He also appears in *Hunt. 71*.

Adam copied *JB* for Adam Zihrun, "a craftsman of Basra," who belongs to the lineage of the famous Bihram BrHiia (the elder) of the Kuhailia clan (Bihram BrHiia is datable around 1500). The colophon attests to the same switches between the terms *kurasa* and *sidra* that we saw in *Ms. A*. To complicate matters, Adam sometimes uses the term *drašia* ("books")—in the plural.

There are twenty-nine scribal lineages in *Hunt. 71*'s colophon, ending with Sku Hiia, who "copied from an old *kurasa* that was with him." Many previously encountered copyists appear in *Hunt. 71*, and we may note that in *Ms. A*, when Adam Zihrun copied *JB* for the benefit of the craftsman Našim Bulbul, *JB* now, in *Hunt. 71*, seems to be used by copyist no. 2 in its roster: the *ganzibra* Baktiar Bulbul. Našim Bulbul, who here is copyist no. 3, is the brother of no. 4, Matrud, and the two share the same lineage.

Among the scribes in *Hunt. 71* we find many familiar ones, such as Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan (no. 8), Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar, (no. 9), and Bihram BrHiia, son of Adam Zakia (no. 11). The lone woman (no. 15) is the "pure cloud" Yasmin Mudalal. Her husband, Mhatam, of the Kuhailia clan, copies from her book. The same pattern appears in other colophons, as Yasmin Mudalal is obviously the owner of trusted texts, probably an inheritance from her father's house (as I have suggested earlier). Interestingly, *Hunt. 71*'s colophon does not identify Yasmin Mudalal and Mhatam as husband and wife, perhaps wishing to avoid revealing information about a priestly couple.

When the roster of scribes reaches no. 18, Baktiar Tilidia, the coherence with *Ms. A* stops, and the list follows more or less that of Mr. Sobbi's

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[13] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, ix.

JB (to which I turn in the next section of this chapter). It is worth noting that an unnamed woman appears as book-owner in *Ms. B*. A similar phrase in *Hunt. 71* seems innocent enough: it says that Yahia, son of Adam Zihrun Hibil, copied from a *sidra* belonging to Baktiar Tilidia. But in *Ms. B*, an intervening copyist link occurs, and here the book is identified as owned by the *mother* of Baktiar Tilidia.[14]

Sarwan, son of Šitil, son of Haiašum, is scribe no. 27 in *Hunt. 71*. Haiašum is attested as scribe in his own right only in *Ginza Mss. B*, *C*, and *Hunt. 71*, as far as I know. But he occurs as a pupil of Sku Hiia elsewhere, and Haiašum is the initiator of Sam in *DC 30*. Haiašum's name is unusual, and when one examines his slot in the *Ginza* colophons, it seems clear that he is roughly a contemporary of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. But he is probably older than Bayan Hibil, who consolidated the Mandaean liturgies, according to *CP*. With the exception of *one JB* colophon that I have seen (treated in the next section of this chapter), Sku Hiia concludes the list.

Adam, the scribe of *Hunt. 71*, states that "the governor of the world is Šah Suleiman, son of Šah Abas, son of Abas, son of Ṣabia." On map XII in Jere Bachrach's work,[15] the broken line indicating the border between Ottoman and Safavid territories in the seventeenth century runs just east of Basra. Adam identifies Ottoman rulers, and he says that the government is that of Rum (i.e., Byzantium) and Turkey. Adam invokes Hibil, Šitil, and Anuš as supporters against the evil and lying sons of the evil age, which is characterized by corruption and bribery.

THREE COPIES OF THE *BOOK OF JOHN* IN AMERICA

In Flushing, New York, Mr. Nasser Sobbi owns a well-thumbed copy of *JB*, dating to 1910, from the town of Amara on the Tigris. Sh. Negm gave Mr. Sobbi the book, but he himself had not copied it. It was written by a son/initiate of the famous cholera survivor Yahia Bihram. The copyist, Mhatam, is not attested elsewhere so far. Mhatam did the work for the benefit of his sister Hašumah (baptismal name: Mahnuš, daughter of Šarat). We do not know whether Mhatam is a biological son of Yahia Bihram and therefore possibly a brother of Siouffi's informant, the apostate Adam, already a Christian in the 1870s.[16]

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[14] See also chap. 8 above.

[15] Bachrach, *Near East Studies Handbook*, 67.

[16] It is not entirely clear whether Adam is a son or a grandson of Yahia Bihram. See Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 118.

Mhatam copies from Yahia Bihram's *JB*, an interesting piece of information, because I have never seen any other references to *JB* being among Yahia Bihram's books, and Yahia Bihram is not recorded as having copied *JB* himself. (Recall, however, from chap. 7, that at some point all of Yahia Bihram's books were stolen or confiscated.) Yahia Bihram's text is called a *ktaba*, while the preceeding work is indicated as a *kurasa*. That one was owned by a lofty *ganzibra* and initiator of at least eight novices, the frequently encountered Yahia Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun (of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans). He copied *JB* for his second sister, who remains unnamed, thought *she* copied it from a manuscript by the artistically accomplished Yahia Ram Zihrun, of *Dmut Kušṭa* fame. It seems odd that the sister was both a client and a copyist, but so the text says (probably erroneously).

Something else is odd here: Yahia Ram Zihrun, from whom the unnamed woman copies *JB*, is the grandson of the just-mentioned *ganzibra* Yahia Yuhana. This *ganzibra* is Yahia Ram Zihrun's maternal grandfather,[17] but the grandson here precedes the grandfather as copyist!

As noted earlier,[18] in 1818, in his postscript to *Dmut Kušṭa*, Yahia Ram Zihrun testifies that all Mandaean priests in his area (he lives in Qurna) have been exiled. Indeed, the just-mentioned Yahia Yuhana[19] belongs among the banned ones, along with his son, the *ganizbra* Sam Bihram. This Sam Bihram does not appear as a scribe in *JB*'s list, but a namesake does: Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Bihram of the Manduia and ʿKuma clans. This Sam Bihram is the great-great-great-grandfather of Lamea Abbas Amara, whose *JB* colophon is examined below.

Further on in Mr. Sobbi's *JB* colophon appears a woman book-owner and scribe, Miriah. Much praise—in the usual formulaic manner—is lavished on her. The colophon identifies her baptismal name as "Mamania, daughter of Mamania, and daughter of Salim." I add the "and" here, because it does not make sense that Salim is Miriah's maternal grandfather (if so, the expression would have been different). She belongs to the 1700s, to the Mahpud and ʿKuma clans. The verb forms for "copied" are reversed with regard to Miriah and her scribal successor Yahia Yuhana, so that he is linked to the feminine form of the verb and she to the masculine form, an obvious error. The verbs are simply misplaced.

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[17] This information is in *Sfar M.*(Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 155).

[18] For example, in chap. 10 above.

[19] Yahia Yuhana is the uncle of Yahia Bihram.

Miriah (or: Yahia Yuhana) copies from a scribe of the Manduia and ʿKuma families: Ram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zihrun. Ram Yuhana, known from *CP*, *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, and the Australian *Ginza*, copies the *kurasa* for the benefit of his mother, Šamiat. For generations here, the copying goes on within the Manduia and ʿKuma clans, to whom Šamiat also belongs. Ram Yuhana copies from a *kurasa* owned by a *ganzibra*, Šitil, son of Sam Yuhana, son of Yahia Adam. This *ganzibra* worked on behalf of a man named Ganʿil, and he, Šitil, used the copy belonging to his own father, Sam Yuhana. Here seems to be an error, since the clan now suddenly is identified as Kuhailia, not ʿAsakir. Sam Yuhana's lineage list is shortened, however, and I tend to favor the longer one, the one belonging to his father.

Sam Yuhana is a much-attested copyist, from *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, the Australian *Ginza*, *CP*, Ms. Syr. F 2 (R), and de Morgan's manuscripts. He copied from another well-known copyist, Yahia Yuhana, son of Ram, Kuhailia. From here on, the roster in Mr. Sobbi's *JB* closely follows *DC 30* and/or Paris *Ms. B*. The only discrepancy is that the luminary Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, who is never otherwise present in a *JB* colophon, here indeed appears. As in other *JB* mss, Yasmin Mudalal turns up, six links removed from Yahia. The colophon ends with Sku Hiia, but here his father is (wrongly) identified by the same name.

The Mandaeans suffer bitterly in 1910 in the Amara district, according to the postscript. "There is no tendon to support the hearts of the faith," Mhatam exclaims. Unlike treatments in other time periods, the people are not killed, but they are forced to join the army, bereft of their traditional clothes and coerced to wear pants, jacket, and the Turkish fez. Even sons of priests are conscripted, and the powerless community cannot prevent what is happening. Still, holding out hope for peace and serenity in the Lightworld, the copyist encourages "his good brothers" to persevere. The ruler is Mhamad (Mehmet) Rashad (r. 1909–1918), who, among other tasks, had to deal with the Albanian uprising in 1910—the year of *JB*'s copying—a war for which Mhamad Rashad clearly needed soldiers.

The *JB* colophon that bears the least resemblance to any of the others is in the book owned by Lamea Abbas Amara. Hers is the next-youngest *JB* I have seen, dating to 1922, Naṣiriyah. The book was given to Lamea by her maternal uncle, Sh. Dakhil, on the last day before he died in 1964. *JB* is bound as the second book in a volume that begins with a collection of prayers, also copied by Mhatam Zihrun, a year before he copied *JB*. (He also did two *Ginzas*, in 1898 and 1935, as noted in chap. 3.) Sh. Dakhil (i.e., Mhatam Zihrun) is the scribe, and he copied it for himself from the book of a craftsman named Dagir (baptismal name: Adam Zihrun, son of Mudalal). Dagir is a nephew of one of Sh. Damouk's (= Mhatam Yuhana's)[20] initiates, Yahia. Yahia is the next copyist. Dagir's lineage is very long, with sixteen names beyond his own, and seven of them are secular names, which shows Dagir's lay status, though he is a book-owner. At the end of the lineage, Mhatam Zihrun reveals that Dagir "copied from a *kurasa* that his own uncle wrote." This uncle is Yahia, initiated by Mhatam Yuhana, as noted. Neither Dagir nor Yahia is attested in other colophons, so far.

Yahia copied for a layman, Mhatam, son of Hawa Mamania, using as his text a prototype belonging to the well-known priest Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram. Ram Zihrun is the cousin and brother-in-law of Yahia Bihram; the men are the famous rescuers of Mandaeism after the 1831 cholera. Only here, in Lamea's *JB*, is Ram Zihrun attested as a *JB* copyist, as far as I have seen. The beneficiary of Ram Zihrun's book was a woman named Anhar, daughter of Ridapa ("persecution"). No wonder the mother is so named, for she lived in turbulent times. From the Australian *Ginza*, we learn that Yahia Bihram copied *that* text for the same woman's benefit. But Anhar herself is not found elsewhere in colophons.

Ram Zihrun used the book of his father-in-law Adam Yuhana, son of Sam. Indeed, the *JB* colophon says that Adam Yuhana is "the father of his [Ram Zihrun's] wife." She is none other than the priest Bibia Mudalal.[21] Next comes an otherwise unattested person—a beneficiary, not a copyist—but a fighter for the Mandaean cause: Mula Abdlšik, of the ʿAziz and Durašia clans. Despite the unusual (Arabic) title "Mula," which means "Sir" or "Lord,"[22] he was certainly not a Muslim, but a respected Mandaean layman. Of him, the colophon states that he "beat down threats against the root of Light, and they [i.e., the enemies] did not attack." We have no further information about Abdlšik's heroism here (but the colophon of the Iranian *JB* reveals an enigmatic detail about him). Adam Yuhana copied *JB* for Mula Abdlšik, using a copy belonging to the much-lauded *ganzibra* Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun Adam[23] (Dihdaria, Sabur, and Baṭahaiia clans).

Yahia Yuhana is the well-known copyist of *MHZ*, *Sfar M.*, de Morgan's *Qmaha of Hibil Ziwa*, and Mr. Sobbi's *Ginza*. He is the initiator of Bihram Sam, *DMʿL*'s copyist (in 1789), the maternal grandfather of Yahia Ram Zihrun of *Dmut Kušṭa* fame. With Yahia Yuhana, we find that he marks the only instance in which Lamea's and Mr. Sobbi's *JB*s have a copyist in common in the relatively late stages of the lineages. It is obvious that in 1910, when Mhatam, son of Yahia Bihram, copied Mr. Sobbi's *JB* from his father/initiator, it must have been a very old book. Elsewhere, Yahia Yuhana is said to have initiated eight priests. Here, in *JB*, he is co-owner of the book together with his fellow-initiate Adam, a man not encountered elsewhere. The two may be brothers. At least two different clan names occur as personal names in Adam's lineage, which indicates an interlinking of clans in the initiations. We do not seem to have a straight line of descent to an ancient progenitor in the same family.

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[20] Sh. Damouk is Lamea's great-grandfather.

[21] She does not appear by name in this colophon.

[22] *MD*, 261b.

[23] The two parts of the name are often reversed.

Yahia Yuhana copied the text for his own aunt. Here, in fact, we encounter the woman priest Qinta, daughter of Zihrun Adam. As a beneficiary, Qinta is not a copyist. Did her own husband initiate her into priesthood? We do not know. But her nephew, Yahia Yuhana, was initiated by his uncle, Zihrun Adam, who, as we note, carries the same name as Qinta's father/initiator.

Yahia Yuhana copied from the book of Bihram BrHiia (the elder), who copied from "the son of the brother of his mother,"—that is, Yahia Yuhana's maternal cousin Yahia Dihdar, son of Adam Šitlan (Buhaiir clan). Bihram BrHiia then appears for the second time as scribe.

Right here, at Bihram BrHiia, the colophon in Lamea's *JB* begins to follow the lineages in *CP* colophons 2 and 3, in a mixed fashion, and the earlier parts adhere to colophon no. 3 more than to no. 2. Next, after Bihram BrHiia, comes Adam Zakia, son of Yahia Yuhana, and the fifth link in Adam Zakia's lineage is the famous name Abulfaraš. It is tempting to identify him with the ethnarch Adam Abulfaraš, but the time period is wrong. From here on, I mention only certain highlights of Lamea's *JB* colophon. As noted, the similarities with *CP* no. 3 are particularly striking.

The family name Maluha ("salty")[24] is not a common one, but it appears in a lineage two generations from Adam Zakia, son of Yahia Yuhana. In between, the clan name Qamnia ("weapons") occurs, also an unusual name. In a lineage containing the clan name Maluha, Abulfaraš appears as a compound name, twice, which shows the name's popularity in this lineage.

Two women priests, Šarat Yasmin, daughter of Yahia Diqnana, and Hawa Mahnuš, daughter of Yahia, are known from *CP*, and they now show up in the colophon of Lamea's *JB*. The two women are separated in the roster by a male scribe, (Yahia) Bihram, son of Adam, who copied the text twice. Yahia Bihram copied from his mother's book, and the mother is Šarat Yasmin. The second time Yahia Bihram copied *JB*, he used Hawa Mahnuš's book. She is attested in colophons 2 and 3 in *CP*.

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[24] *MD*, 244b.

Right before Hawa Mahnuš, two important copyists who are not otherwise attested in *JB* show up in Lamea's copy of it. They are Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, Zarzuia, and Bihram Zakia, son of Bayan, Šupartaiia. Inserted between them comes Šadan, son of Paiiš Zarzuia. Sarwan Bulbul appears very often in Mandaean colophons, and the two others are known mainly from *CP*. All three copied from one another's *JB* books.

After these three scribes, corruptions are evident in the colophon, and I have filled the gaps by consulting *CP*. The ethnarch Yahia (Sam) Adam,[25] son of Sam Saiwia, turns up. We know that Sam Saiwia is one generation younger than the woman ethnarch Haiuna. Sam Saiwia copied *ATŠ* from Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat. Here, in Lamea's *JB*, the (misidentified) ethnarch Yahia (Sam) Adam copied the text for the benefit of his maternal cousin Sam BrHiia, son of Mhatam Haiašum.

The preceding copyist is Ram Ziwa Bihram, son of Bayan Hibil. These are famous men in *CP*: recall their statements in *CP* on securing reliable Mandaean liturgies around the year 700.[26] Bayan Hibil copied *JB* from the *sidra* of his pupil Yahia, son of Yuhana Bihram,[27] who is attested in *CP*. Then Ram Ziwa Bihram, son of Bayan Hibil and grandson of Zindana, shows up for the second time, as copying "from a *šapta*" (a scroll) of his own. This is the only time I have seen *šapta* used for *JB*'s format. Ram Ziwa Bihram had copied this scroll "from a scroll of the father of his mother," and this grandfather is none other than ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.

Here the colophon ends. Sku Hiia, the last copyist in other *JB* manuscripts, does not appear. Lamea's *JB* colophon differs from other *JB* lists, and it is interesting that so many luminaries appear, priests absent from other *JB* scribal rosters. The ties to *CP* are clear. We see that colophon 3 in *CP* ends with the same person as Lamea's *JB*: ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.

The postscript was done in the last summer month of AH 1341 (1922) in Mhatam Zihrun's own house in Naṣiriyah, in the area of Mintipiš (= Muntafiq), on the Euphrates. The emir is Feisal, son of Husain, and the English brought Feisal from Mekka, says the postscript. (This is, of course, historically correct). The English appointed him to be Sultan in Iraq, "in all the cities of the English." Mhatam Zihrun then refers to the agreement made between the Arabs and the English.

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[25] The name is corrupted here, rendered as Hibil Yahia Sam.

[26] See chap. 9 above on the *CP* liturgies, with reference to Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71–72.

[27] Why are there two teachers for Yahia?

When I mentioned the information in this postscript to Mr. Nasser Sobbi in October 2001, he said that he remembers hearing about these events. When Feisal was installed, he told me, and the Persian Shah[28] learned that the Arabs would only give five meters of the Šatt al-Arab to Persia—and not share the waterway equally—he responded, "What are they going to do? Drink it all? They are crazy, those Arabs!"

Finally, the last *JB* treated here: a photocopy of a recently copied Iranian *JB* in upstate New York. It is owned by Dr. Sinan Abdullah in Niskayuna, who obtained the text from Ahwaz, Iran, where its copying was concluded in 1991 by the *yalufa* Sheikh Salem Choheili. Despite his honorific title, Sh. Choheili is not a priest, but an extraordinarily learned layman. His *maṣbuta* name is Bayan, son of Šarat.[29]

He begins his colophon in an untraditional manner, giving his name as "Bayan, son of Šarat, son of Adam, son of Adam, son of Ram, Kuhilia, Durašia." It is not common to include the baptismal name in this particular kind of context, but perhaps it is becoming normal in modern copyist lists, and it may be understandable because the scribe is not a priest.

Sh. Choheili also gives his common name, ʿIdan, son of Salman (identified with Adam, as above), son of Salim (whose baptismal name is also Adam), son of Sumil (= Ram). Then follows a continuation of Sh. Choheili's ancestral lineage, and in the ninth to eleventh generations we arrive at priestly names. This demonstrates that Sh. Choheili had priests in his family, several centuries ago. His grandfather Salim is also the grandfather of the *tarmida* Sh. Talib Durašia[30] of Ahwaz, and from Salim on, the two men's lineages are identical.

Copying for his own salvific benefit, Sh. Choheili used a manuscript belonging to Zihrun, son of Simat. Zihrun's secular name is Dihdar, Mula Abadalah, and he belongs in the same generation as Sh. Jabbar Tawoosie, the present *ganzibra* of Ahwaz, a priest now in his eighties. Mula Abadalah's lineage is the same as that of Sh. Jabbar and his two sons, the *tarmida* Sh. Najah and the *ganzibra* Sh. Salah, the latter residing in Australia.

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[28] The last of the Qajars, Shah Ahmad (r. 1909–1924).

[29] For Sh. Choheili, who was my trusted companion virtually every day during my stay in Iran in April 1996, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 6.

[30] Spelled "Durakia" in colophons.

Mula Abadalah used a *JB* belonging to a priest, Bihram, son of Sam Bihram. This Bihram is new to me, so far, and he belongs to the same generation and the same lineage as the cholera survivor Ram Zihrun. (The clan names are ʿAziz, Kupašia, and Durakia). Bihram and Ram Zihrun are brothers, for the colophon specifies that Sam Bihram is the father of Bihram. Bihram probably died in the cholera epidemic. It is important not to confuse this Bihram with the namesake copyist of *DC 40: Pašar ḏ-Mihla* ("The Exorcism of Salt") in 1831, because that copyist was an initiate of Ram Zihrun.

The lineage of Bihram, son of Bihram, is slightly corrupt, as compared with equivalent rosters in other colophons. Bihram copied for the benefit of a woman, Hawa, daughter of Šarat—her given name is Kaznih, daughter of Suišar. She belongs to the Šupartaiia and Zahrooni families, and there are no priest names in her long family tree.

The information about the next copyist is muddled, but it seems that Sam Bihram (just above) was the owner of the manuscript, which he in turn had copied for the woman Mamania, daghter of Maliha, given name Sibahiah, daughter of Nahia, and her family name is Šizania. I have not encountered Sam Bihram as a scribe earlier. He used a copy belonging to his brother, Adam Yuhana, son of Sam Bihram, of the Kamisia and Riš Draz clans.

Here, the colophon begins to follow that of Lamea's *JB*, but only for a while. That book contained an interesting piece of information about the pious Mandaean for whom the book was copied, Abdelšik ʿDia (or: ʿAidia).[31] He beat down attacks against the Mandaeans. But here, in the Iranian *JB*, he is characterized as "having experienced afflictions and cut." It may be that "cut" (which is somewhat conjectural), refers to forced circumcision, as documented by Yahia Bihram.[32] Yahia Bihram said that after the cholera, Mandaeans subjected to such atrocities had been taken back into the Mandaean fold. This was probably due to the decimation of the Mandaean population at the time.

Sam Bihram copied from the well-known scribe Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun (Adam). As we have noted, he is the maternal grandfather of Yahia Ram Zihrun, and their relationship is attested in *Sfar M.*[33] In Lamea's *JB*, Yahia Yuhana was identified as coowner of the book, together with Adam, but this is wrong; and in the Iranian *JB*, Yahia Yuhana's lineage is erroneous, too. His lineage is: Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun Adam, son of Zihrun, and so on, of Dihdaria and Baṭahaiia clans. By mistake, Zihrun Adam is split into two persons, Zihrun and Adam, the conjunction "and" being inserted between the names, giving the bewildering impression that there are two owners, Yahia Yuhana, son of Zihrun, and Adam, son of Zihrun.

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[31] This person's lineage is longer in Lamea's *JB*.

[32] See chap. 7 above on Yahia Bihram.

[33] Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 155.

It is worth recalling that in Lamea's *JB*, Yahia Yuhana copied the book for the benefit of his aunt, Qinta, a daughter of Zihrun Adam. In the Iranian *JB*, the predecessor to Yahia Yuhana's manuscript is that of Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, of the Dihdar and Sabur families. Ram Yuhana copied several texts, among them *DC 30*, in 1753. In both *JB*s, Ram Yuhana copied from the woman priest Mamul Dihgan, daughter of Bihram. In fact, from this point on, the two *JB* colophons follow one another, with Mamul Dihgan copying from the book of her husband, Badur. The phrase "her husband" is missing in *DC 30*, but it is present in the Iranian *JB*. Badur is a lay name, and his *maṣbuta* name is Adam Zihrun, but it is incomplete, because his mother's name does not occur. But Badur's male, non-priestly lineage is presented in the colophon.

The lineages in the Iranian JB tend to be shorter than in DC *30*. For nine generations, the lists cohere in the two books, including the information about the four manuscripts that Zakia Bayan, son of Yahia Bihram, consulted. A break occurs after Zihrun Hibil, son of Yahia Sam, for from here on the colophon links up with that of Mr. Sobbi's *JB*. Many of the identical formulas appear, and Yasmin Mudalal, daughter of Adam Bihram, Zarzuia, turns up. She was not present in Lamea's *JB*.

Her husband, Mhatam Zihrun, Kuhailia, seems to be the son of Bihram BrHiia the younger.[34] Mhatam Zihrun's wife, Yasmin Mudalal, comes from the Zarzuia clan, and through her marriage becomes related to the Kuhailia clan. She is attested only as a *JB* copyist—in four different manuscripts—whereas her husband is a more prolific scribe. Here in the Iranian *JB*, Yasmin Mudalal (unlike in Mr. Sobbi's *JB*) seems to be copying from her father-in-law's book. However, here the manuscript has an ink blotch, and the lineage may be corrupt.

Aside from a few discrepancies, the enumerated names follow those of Mr. Sobbi's book, and they soon connect with *DC 30*, too. All three lists are quite coherent toward the end, tending to be very similar in all *JB* manuscripts I have seen (the exception, of course, being Lamea's book). In Sh. Choheili's copy, the last scribe is Suk (error for: Sku) Hiia, son of Sku Hiia. In *DC 30*, the father is ʿIdai, not another Sku Hiia. Only Lamea's *JB* ended with ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, and this link is the penultimate one here in Sh. Choheili's *JB*.

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[34] This Bihram BrHiia is a son of Baktiar, the former being the nephew of Bihram BrHiia (the elder).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

When one compares Mr. Sobbi's *JB* from 1910 with the Iranian one from 1991, the difference of 81 years may first spring naturally to the eye. But Mr. Sobbi's *JB* is the outcome of many more generations of copying than the Iranian one. Sam Yuhana, son of Mhatam, ʿAsikir, who is copyist no. 13 (from the beginning) in the Iranian book, finds his place as no. 21 in the Flushing *JB*. So, from the beginning and the end of the twentieth century (1910 and 1991) to about 1500 (Sam Yuhana's lifetime), we find more copyists in the Flushing *JB* than in the Iranian one. In 1910, Mhatam, son of Yahia Bihram, used his father's book, and Yahia Bihram was alive as late as 1870.[35] In 1991, when Sh. Choheili concluded his work on *JB*, he used a manuscript from a man belonging in Ram Zihrun's generation, possibly Ram Zihrun's own brother.

Aligning other scribes across the colophon dividing-lines, one finds, for example, that *DC 30*'s copyist, in 1753, Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, occupies the same space as copyist no. 7 in the Iranian *JB* from 1991. Between the scribe of Mr. Sobbi's *JB* and that of *Ms. B* (Zihrun, son of Adam) lie 293 years. Now, if we are looking for Sam Yuhana, son of Adam, ʿAsikir, we find that he is no. 10 in the scribal lists of both Mr. Sobbi's *JB* and Paris *Ms. B*. This seems surprising and even wrong—given the time difference—but by comparing the lineages from the beginning to the end in each book a reader will have to conclude: *Ms. B* was the outcome of much more copying in the hundred or so years before 1617 than was the future Flushing *JB* during the equivalent period.

A copyist like Matrud, son of Baktiar, who is present in *JB Mss. A* and *C* and in *Hunt. 71*, occupies scribal slot no. 3 in the first two, and no. 4 in *Hunt. 71*. This makes very good sense, because all three manuscripts are so close in time. A comparison between the colophon in, say, a twentieth-century *JB* and a seventeenth-or eighteenth-century one demonstrates that in terms of computation of scribal generations, it is advantageous to rely on correlations of scribes whose neighbors we know and can date.

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[35] See Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 117 n. 125.

In Mandaean scribal history, we discover spurts of copyist activities within a short period, while we detect large leaps at other times, with scribes relying on very old books. One example is that in 1991, only one scribal link appears between Sh. Choheili and the *JB* belonging to a son of Sam Bihram. Unless Sam Bihram had passed away already, we may assume that he was a victim of the great *muṭana* of 1831. So, between 1991 and 1831—a span of 160 years—we find three scribal links, not five, which the usual reckoning of some thirty years per generation would yield. Comparing the sheer number of copyist lineages (and, importantly, excluding those of beneficiaries!) in Mr. Sobbi's book and in *Hunt. 71*, one finds that there are forty in the Flushing *JB* and twenty-nine in *Hunt. 71*.

To finish on a diffferent note: *JB* itself needs a reexamination, for many reasons. One must try to determine, yet again, the age, significance, and possible origins of the various tractates. Lidzbarskis' diligent efforts to make sense of the book's contents are eloquently expressed in the introduction to the tractate he calls "The Soul Fisher."[36] On a ship from Constantinople to Beirut in the fall of 1910,[37] Lidzbarski searched the vessel's classes of passengers for Iraqis as potential informants on the fishing and shipping terminology found in *JB*, since many of the words and expressions have nothing to do with Mandaic but reflect local Arabic usage. He did not get very far. Translating *JB* is a daunting task, even for Lidzbarski, and very little of *JB* has appeared in languages other than German.[38] A complete English translation is sorely needed.

Like the *Ginza*, *CP*, and other liturgies, *JB* seems to be copied vigorously in the early Islamic period. Lamea's *JB*, in particular, gives a good indication that *JB*'s status is on a par with that of other Mandaean literature around 700–800. Among the *JB* scribes we have seen some women, though not many. With regard to women priests (chap. 8 above), one might note that Theodor Nöldeke, unlike Drower and Macuch, did not try to avoid the impression that women might hold priestly office in Mandaeism. The term "*tarmid(i)ata*" occurs in only a few texts, and *JB* is among them.[39] Nöldeke translates the word in two ways—without judgmental attitudes—as "Schülerinnen, Priesterinnen."[40]

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[36] See Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 140.

[37] The same year as Mr. Sobbi's *JB* is being copied in Amara.

[38] Exceptions are in Werner Foerster, *Gnosis*, 2:148–317. See also my "Professional Fatigue: Hibil's Lament in the Mandaean *Book of John*" and "Hibil's Lament from *The Book of John*." A much older study is Paul Joüon, "Les discours de Shoum Koushta."

[39] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 50.

Whether men or women, Mandaeans did—and do—copy *JB*, but how frequently? Everyone knows the obvious: the book is not a liturgy, not used outdoors, and consequently subject to less wear and tear than prayerbooks. Still, Mandaeans continue to study *JB* and to hold it in high regard.

APPENDIX

In the table opposite, information is gathered about the eight *JB* colophons I have studied.

With respect to Paris *Ms. A*, *DC 30*, and Mr. Sobbi's *JB*, we find that Sam Yuhana, son of Yahia Adam, ʿAsikir, is scribe no. 10 in the first and last manuscripts, but he is no. 8 in *DC 30*.

In Paris *Ms. C* and in Lamea's *JB*, Bihram BrHiia is scribe no. 11 and no. 8, respectively. In Lamea's *JB*, we see that with Bihram BrHiia the colophon starts to follow the scribal lineages of *CP* colophons 2 and 3. Except for her *JB*, the other *JB* texts end with the scribe Sku Hiia.

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[40] Nöldeke, *Mandäische Grammatik* §135, p. 169 line 5. See again chap. 8 above for comparison.

	Paris *Ms. A*	Paris *Ms. B*	Paris *Ms. C*	*Hunt. 71*	*DC 30*	Lamea's *JB*	Mr. Sobbi's *JB*	Bayan's *JB*
place of copying	Khalafabad	Mina	Doraq	Basra	Šuštar	Nasoriyah	Amara	Ahwaz
date of copying	1629	1617	1690	1658	1753	1922	1910	1991
copyist	Adam Zihrun,	Zihrun,	Adam Zihrun,	Adam,	Ram Yuhana,	Mhatam Zihrun,	Mhatam,	Bayan,
clan name	Quṭana	Faraš, ʿKuma	Ram Ziwa	Ram Ziwa	Dihdaria and Sabur	Manduia	Kamisia	Kuhailia

12 TRACKING THE OBSCURE CENTURIES: BETWEEN 1450 AND 700

Because we can date scribes at either end of the range between the fourteenth and eighth centuries with relative certainty, it is useful to track the scribes within this period. Among the questions are, do the same copyists appear in colophons during the "Middle Ages" and, who are they? The copyists that can be dated roughly between the years 1450 and 700 do not always carry clan names. But I will keep track of the family names that *do* appear, focusing especially on the earliest ones. In terms of sheer numbers, the "funnel" of copyist names narrows considerably. In the centuries under investigation, we shall still see the existence of distinct, separate lineages. Unfortunately, we have no postscripts directly by the scribes, as no known Mandaean texts in the West are copied earlier than 1529. However, a few statements by early luminaries are recorded.

In this chapter, I make use of a limited selection of sources in order to document the scribal activities during the stated centuries. It is necessary to begin as late as the sixteenth century, and to employ scribal lineage from centuries through the thirteenth-century invasion of the Mongols to times beyond. Incidentally, unlike the sometimes violently changing attitudes of local Muslim rulers, there is no indication that the Mongols left much of a disturbing impact on the Mandaeans.

Presenting selected useful threads in the attempt to gain a picture of scribal activity, I examine colophons in the following documents:

1. A *tarik* (postscript) from 1480, tacked onto the exorcism *DC 12*
2. Colophon no. 4 in *CP* aligned with the first colophon in the Bodleian Library's 1529 prayerbook *Marsh. 691*
3. Colophons in the texts *Zihrun Raẓa Kasia* (ZRK), *Alma Rišaia Rba (ARR)*, and *Alma Rišaia Zuṭa* (*ARZ*)
4. *ATŠ*'s highly valuable genealogy of Zakia Zihrun (Kuhailia clan), along with information in Zakia Zihrun's colophons in this document

The resulting "bundle" is intended to prepare the reader for the following chapter, which investigates the earliest segments of Mandaean colophons. As for the present chapter, it is worth noting that *CP* and *Marsh. 691* are liturgies. These are used constantly, whether outdoors or under roofs, and copied frequently. Many of them have far more extensive copyist lineages (especially in recent centuries) than texts that remain indoors, are handled less, are considered "secret," and are copied more rarely. Excepting the 1480 *tarik*, *CP* and *Marsh. 691*, all belong to the category of "ritual-esoteric commentaries."

Certain lineages and clans will predominate in the present chapter, despite the fact that family names tend to disappear from the early parts of colophons. For instance, when we reach Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, and the ethnarch Haiuna (650–700s), we have long since lost track of clan names familiar from more recent centuries. But we shall see that certain clans are indeed attested quite far back in time. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether a specific appellation is a family name or a nickname. The priestly names, on the other hand, in most cases remain remarkably familiar and constant throughout the centuries. Malwašia names are recognizable from the third century to the present.

THE *TARIK* IN *DC 12*

In 1782, Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, Kamisia, copied what later became *DC 12: Pašar Haršia* (The Exorcism of Wizards). Adam Yuhana copied the text in the town of Šaka by the Karka river (I have not been able to locate the town). The colophon has only two lineages apart from Adam Yuhana's own.

Drower was interested in the old *tarik* pasted onto the end of the exorcism, but Sh. Abdullah Khaffagi had refused to sell it. Evidently, she must have succeeded later on, for the text was bought from Sheikh Abdullah in Ahwaz in 1933, forty years before I met the same sheikh in the same city. Mr. Nasser Sobbi was nine years old in 1933, and he remembers Lady Drower coming from Ahwaz to Khorramshahr, and that she marveled over the local Khuzistani Mandaean children speaking Mandaic (most Iraqi Mandaeans no longer spoke the language). The Khorramshahr children, in turn, were happy and impressed that a foreign lady knew their language. "She spoke good *Mandai*!" says Mr. Sobbi.[1]

To return to *DC 12*: attached to Adam Yuhana's postscript is a glued-on, much older *tarik*, four inches wide and eighty lines long. This one, says Sh. Abdullah, comes from elsewhere. Using the common formula, "Then, O brothers who are coming after us!" Sh. Abdullah employs his *maṣbuta* name, Sam Yuhana, son of Bihram. He states that he wrote this *tarik* from a manuscript belonging to Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram. Ram Zihrun is Sh. Abdullah's own grandfather, and Sh. Abdullah himself was no. 15 in the long lineage of Kupašia and Durakia priests. Bihram, father of Sh. Abdullah, is the copyist of the so far untranslated *Exorcism of Salt* (*DC 40*).

Sh. Abdullah further says that his grandfather, Ram Zihrun, found this *tarik* in the manuscript of Yuhana Šitlan, son of Zakia Šitlan (Buhair clan). Yuhana Šitlan "worked and succeeded in it [i.e., in his copying] from the scroll *Pašar Ainia*." This is *The Exorcism of Eyes*—against the evil eye and eye diseases—where the *tarik* obviously belonged originally. Drower bought a copy of this exorcism—from Sh. Faraj in 1935.[2]

Here is my translation of the *tarik*, as Sh. Abdullah copied it:

> He [i.e., Yuhana Šitlan] wrote the *tarik*, (which is) 885 years of the age,[3] according to the computation of the Arabs.
>
> Again, the governor of the Arabs is Sultan Muhsin, son of Mahdia. He is the son of Siid Hasan, who is in Šizaiir.[4] I am in Šuštar, at home. Paiad, son of Mhamad, is the governor of Šuštar—may Manda d̲-Hiia bring to nothing their rage against the great stem of souls!
>
> O, my brothers who are coming after us! There are in Šuštar four thousand Mandaean houses ["in Šuštar" is repeated], and four hundred *tarmida*s and fifty *ganzibra*s. I am facing them, the schemers of the seven and the twelve,[5] and they were placed in authority over them [i.e., over

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[1] In that same year, says Mr. Sobbi, there was no *ganzibra* in Ahwaz, but the Khorramshahr *ganzibra* was Sh. Masboob, the grandfather of Sh. Fawzi Masboob of Detroit.

[2] The text is *DC 21*, and it dates to 1853. Drower published the text as "S̲h̲afta d̲ Pis̲h̲ra d̲ Ainia" in two installments. The scroll has magical figures. In her type-written list of *DC* documents, Drower writes, "I find much to correct in this translation now." Sh. Faraj is among the priests depicted in at least one photograph in *MII* (see my foreword to the 2002 reprint).

[3] That is, 1480 CE.

[4] i.e., Upper Mesopotamia.

[5] The planets and the zodiac spirits.

> the Mandaeans], and they killed them.[6] There were those who went to the mountain and there were those who sank down into the ocean.[7] Those who were found among them were four *ganzibra*s. One of them was Yahia Ram, {son of}[8] Yuhana, and another one was Bihram, son of Sam Yuhana; and another one was Rba Bihram Yuhana, son of Yahia Zakia Šupartaiia, and another one was Yahia Sam, son of Sam Zihrun, Haiun.
>
> They went to the mountain and stayed for four months. They saw nothing good to eat of the wild plants. And three of them died on the mountain. And there remained one *tarmida*, and his name is Rba Zakia Šitlan, son of Sam Yuhana,[9] son of Sarwan Bahran, son of Adam Baktiar, son of Sam Bahran, son of Yahia, son of Zakia, son of Yuhana, family Buhaiir.
>
> And at that moment there were about fifty houses in Šuštar and about two hundred houses in Huwaiza. And for four years there were no *tarmida*s. There came one *tarmida* from Baghdad and he made a marriage ceremony, in which the bride was already pregnant.[10] And he went to Šizaiir and made a marriage ceremony.
>
> Then he came to Šuštar and taught the *yalufa*s and ordained them to priesthood. There were fourteen, according to this tarik, who went forth from their bodies [i.e., died] on Tuesday,[11] in the year 885, according to the years of the Arabs.
>
> Life be praised above all works! Life is victorious!

Yuhana Šitlan's father, Zakia Šitlan, is the one *tarmida* who survived the massacre and starvation. We may assume that Yuhana Šitlan was initiated into priesthood after the calamity. Zakia Šitlan had another initiate, Mhatam Bayan. He is known from *CP* colophon 4, where he is lauded as "a great, lofty, and respected *ganzibra*, exempt from all blemish."[12] Zakia Šitlan is probably also attested in *ARR*, but there with the epithet Bakšia ("gifts").[13] The time period fits, for Bihram BrHiia copied from Zakia Šitlan, says *ARR*.[14]

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[6] The evil rulers are identified with the planets and the zodiac spirits.

[7] This is a paraphrase of a line in *CP* 30, a baptismal prayer.

[8] "Son of" is left out, erroneously.

[9] Corrected: the text has "Yha."

[10] See *MD*, 232b, s.v. *lugma*.

[11] No month is given.

[12] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 149.

[13] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 52. No initiator's name appears.

[14] Ibid.

Number 4 in Yuhana Šitlan's priestly genealogy, Sarwan Bahran, is identifiable from another source, for *CP*'s colophon 2 attests to him, stating that he is a *ganizbra*. He has a famous initiate, Sam Yuhana (not mentioned in the *tarik*), "a father of *ganzibra*s." We have seen him several times already. He, in turn, initiated Yahia Bihram, a *ganzibra*, also attested as a scribe in colophons. This Yahia Bihram belongs to the same generation as Zakia Šitlan, Yuhana Šitlan's father.

Their lineage is an illustrious one, and in addition to the name Buhaiir, we also find those of Zakia and Zarzuia associated with it. Counting the generations back from Yuhana Šitlan, we can date the last one, Yuhana, about 1240. The Mongols invade during his life and that of his predecessor. As for the ruler Muhsin during Yuhana Šitlan's own time, he belongs to the "White Sheep" dynasty (1378– 1502),[15] reigning in Iraq and Armenia.

It is surprising, perhaps, to see such large numbers of Mandaeans in Huwaiza and Šuštar rebounding after the massacre of the Mandaeans. I doubt that Yuhana Šitlan is exaggerating. We do not know how long before 1480 the described calamities took place, but they must have happened within Yuhana Šitlan's father's generation.

Of the four dead priests, the first one may be identified erroneously in the *tarik*: it is likely that he is Yahia Ram, son of Sam Yuhana (not "Yahia Ram Yuhana"). If so, he is a well-known scribe (of Zakia Šitlan's generation) who fits very well into the same enumeration of Buhaiirs. He is attested in Mr. Sobbi's *Šarh d̲-Qabin*, a copy of an Iranian text from 1688.[16] Here, Yahia Ram is copyist no. 4.

* * *

For now, we can say that the Buhaiir, Zakia, and Zarzuia names are traceable to the mid thirteenth century. As I turn to colophon 4 in *CP* and to *Marsh. 691* next, I focus on the oldest clan names.

CP'S COLOPHON 4 AND *MARSH. 691*

I have already said a little about *CP* 4's colophon in chapter 9, but here I focus on the names between about 1450 and 700. From 1529, we have the

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[15] See Bachrach, *Near East Studies Handbook*, 16, 117–18.

[16] In this text, the governor of Huwaiza, Piršala, son of Alia, son of Kalak, is bluntly characterized: "he is a dog" (*kalba hu*).

Bodleian Library's *Marsh. 691*, a collection of prayers, 116 pages long. The volume is from Huwaiza, September 5, 1529, written by Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan, clan name Šaʿpuria.[17] Adam Zihrun was more or less contemporary with the 1560 Paris *Ginza Ms. A* scribe, Ram Baktiar, son of Bihram Šadan (Quṭana clan). Both priests lived in Huwaiza. Adam Zihrun copied two other texts, and in the next section I return to one of them, *ARZ*, which he did in 1564.

To a remarkable extent, the first colophon—there are three in all—in *Marsh. 691* coheres with the fourth in *CP*, and I will follow a large part of the latter colophon here. The colophon belongs among the four that go back to Zazai of Gawazta; it covers *CP* 103–69, which include, inter alia, the Mandaean daily prayers (the *rahma*s) and the four prayers called "Fruits of Ether." In comparison, after *its* first colophon, *Marsh. 691* says that the prayers include the *rahma*s. At Bihram BrHiia, Kuhailia, the two colophons become virtually identical.

Beginning with Mhatam Bayan, son of Zakia Šitlan, Buhair, familiar from Sh. Abdullah's *tarik*, we now find him in *CP*'s fourth colophon, copying from Bihram BrHiia, Kuhailia. The time is about 1500. Mhatam Bayan's lineage ends with the same person as in the *tarik*: Yahia, Buhaiir.[18] Next in *CP* comes Yahia, son of Adam, ʿAsikir, who is the nephew of Bihram BrHiia. Yahia copied from him. The uncle, in turn, had transcribed the document from *his* uncle: Mhatam Zihrun, son of BrHiia, Kuhailia.[19] This is none other than Yasmin Mudalal's husband, and his family tie to Bihram BrHiia has not been revealed in other colophons that I have seen. Perhaps Yasmin Mudalal was the biological daughter of the famous Bihram BrHiia? Her own initiator was someone else, however: Adam Bihram, Zarzuia.

From Mhatam Zihrun (mid to early 15th century) to Bainai, son of Haiuna, there are eighteen copyists in *CP*'s fourth colophon—excluding beneficiaries and multiple copyings by the same scribe. (I am not listing their names here; some of them appear in *CP*'s first colophon, and elsewhere). Between the two scribes Mhatam Zihrun and Bainai lie about seven hundred years. Assigning thirty-five to forty years per generation, we may begin, cautiously, to place all of the copyists in time. No Kuhailias are mentioned prior to Mhatam Zihrun, though in *ATŠ* we shall see that this clan can be traced to about 1230, some two centuries earlier than Mhatam Zihrun.

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[17] More is said about *Marsh, 691* in chap 13 below.

[18] Here, Drower's translation in *Canonical Prayerbook*, 149, is a bit misleading.

[19] In ibid., Drower does not translate "uncle," but keeps the word *ʿamuya*, which, erroneously, looks like a proper name. Mhatam Zihrun's initiator's and "grandfather's" names are often conflated.

The other family names—and possible nicknames—in the part under examination in *CP*'s fourth colophon and in *Marsh. 691* are: Daudania, Furaih, Tutu[20] ("mulberry"), Gadana ("auspicious"), Ṭruša ("deaf"), Maiʿlia, Baz ("falcon"), and Riš Draz ("long beard"). As family names, some are dubious, but none are *malwašia* designations. The names Daudania, Furaih, and Tutu can be followed to the early thirteenth century, Gadana to about 1200, Ṭruša to the twelfth century, and Maiʿlia, Baz, and Riš Draz to 1000 or 1100.[21]

An important point springs to the eye: all of the eighteen scribes between Mhatam Zihrun, son of Bihram BrHiia, and Bainai, son of Haiuna, are predominantly copyists of liturgies. Two ethnarchs—Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia, and Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad—are known as scribes of the *Ginza*, of *ATŠ*, and of various other texts. Anuš Maʿilia has an eponymous son, but this Anuš Maiʿlia's initiator was someone else: Bihdad Zakia. The time period of the Maʿilias may perhaps be set as early as the ninth century. Another scribe, Yahia Yuhana Bihdad, son of Anuš Maʿilia (the elder), is a *GR* scribe. From another context—*CP*'s first colophon, in fact—we know that Yahia Yuhana Bihdad's grandfather's brother was Sarwan, son of Adam Šabur.[22] As for the "falcons," the Baz family, we shall meet them again in connection with *ZRK*.

Other scribes in *CP*'s fourth colophon are Ram Bayan, son of Sam Daudania, and Sam Bihdad, son of Bihdad Gadana. These are also *Šarh d̲-Qabin* copyists. The eleventh-century Adam, son of Sarwan Ruzba, son of Yahia Baz (or Yahia Sarwan), is attested in *ATŠ*, *DMʿL*, and *ZRK*. Adam initiated his own uncle, "the older brother of his father," into priesthood, says *Marsh. 691*. The uncle is Bihram Bayan, son of Yahia Baz.

Some names appear in connection with repeated copyings in *Marsh. 691* (though there are no such repetitions in *CP*'s fourth colophon). For instance, the liturgies belonging to Adam Zihrun, son of Yahia Yuhana Bihdad, were used many times. Once he copies for the benefit of a pupil, Adam, son of Paiiš; on another occasion, for his own salvation. Such repetitions complicate calculation of generations a bit, though I have not counted

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[20] Clearly identified as a clan name in *Marsh. 691*.

[21] But Maiʿlia can be traced further, to the ninth century; see chap. 13 below.

[22] See chap. 9 above.

Adam Zihrun as many times as he appears in the *Marsh. 691* colophon: five times.

ZIHRUN RAZA KASIA, *ALMA RIŠAIA RBA*, AND *ALMA RIŠAIA ZUṬA*

Zihrun Raẓa Kasia ("Zihrun, The Great Mystery"; *ZRK*) is the title of *DC 27*, an illustrated scroll of 559 lines of text. It is now published.[23] No one apart from Drower has worked on it, as far as I know. The scribe is Zihrun, son of Yahia Mhatam, ʿAsikir clan: the year is 1677, the place, Šuštar.[24] Zihrun is known as no. 3 in *DMʿL*'s copyist list (*DMʿL* was copied in 1789). Here in *ZRK*, Zihrun lists the names of his parents (his own father is his initiator), wife, children, and two sets of siblings.

A word about the drawings: they are in the traditional style. Within a panel, a horizontally drawn date palm separates two rows of plants. The plants are identified as: quince, pomegranate, walnut, grape, sesame; then: tree, wheat, olive, fig, myrtle. Next we see primordial priest figures. First, Yawar Rba stands alone in front of a ritual tray, the *ṭariana*. Then seven others encircle a second tray. Except for the *šganda*, they have *margna*s (priestly staffs) drawn across their bodies.[25] The names of the other figures are Anuš, Hibil Ziwa, Šilmai, Nidbai, Adatan, and Yadatan.

Line 174 says that this *diwan* (illustrated scroll) is the *maṣbuta* of Zihrun, the Great Mystery. Seven brothers gave it to Hibil Ziwa, who brought it down to earth for salvific purposes.

Unlike *Marsh. 691* and *CP*, *ZRK* represents a specific category of Mandaean literature: esoteric ritual commentaries. There are many of them, and we shall see that their colophons often stretch back to Zazai as the first human scribe,[26] as does the present one. In terms of the first colophon in *ZRK* (the text has two, and several postscripts), ten copyists appear between its scribe Zihrun, in 1677, and Bainai, around 700. Compared to *Marsh. 691* (of 1529), which had eighteen scribes between the mid fifteenth century and Bainai, *ZRK* clearly contains considerably fewer, over a larger time span. So, in terms of assigning time periods to scribes, colophons in documents such as *ZRK* may furnish less reliable source material. But the colophons in these texts are valuable for comparative purposes, for discovering new priest lineages and clan names.

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[23] Bogdan Burtea, *Zihrun.*

[24] As we shall see, in the same year and place, Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia, completed *DC 36* (*ATŠ*).

[25] A closer look reveals that he had a staff, but it has been erased. The artist forgot himself, evidently.

[26] For the implications of this fact, see chap. 13 below.

Of the scribes here in *ZRK*, our old acquaintance Bihram BrHiia, Kuhailia, appears as no. 2. Zihrun copied the *diwan* from him, transcribing it for his own benefit. The next copyist is Bihdad Bayan, son of Adam Yuhana, Riš Draz. In Bihdad Bayan's own lineage, the fourth link (i.e., the "great-grandfather") is Bihram Adam Abulfaraš. We have seen this last name several times, but it is best to be cautious and not automatically identify the name with the famous ethnarch in *CP* 170. Abulfaraš is a *malwašia* name, not a clan.

A new family name shows up with copyist no. 4 in *ZRK*: Zihrun, Haiun. Another man of the Haiuns appears in *ZRK*'s second colophon: Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Šitil. Sarwan Baz is inserted into colophon 2, where he is dubbed "king of the Naṣoraeans." Elsewhere, Sarwan Baz appears in an initiator slot in *DMʿL*, in relationship to a priest named Adam. We have seen the Baz clan in the previous section, in *CP*'s colophon 4 and *Marsh. 691*. The Bazes are present further back in time in *ZRK*'s first colophon, in connection with Adam, son of Sarwan Ruzbia. But there is no clan name at the end of the entire lineage, which is a bit unusual.

With the next scribe, Adam (Anuš), ʿKuma, we recognize a *JB* (Paris *Ms. B*) copyist. His predecessor is Zihrun, son of Adam "the Deaf" (Ṭruša). This latter priestly duo is different from *Marsh. 691*, where there was another Ṭruša. A new clan name comes just prior to Adam Ṭruša: Bagania.[27] The scribe here is Bihram, son of Yuhana Ruzbia, Bagania. This clan and the next one, ʿAsakir, are very early. Two other scribes show up before we reach Bainai.

Many of the *ZRK* copyists appear *only* in this document and nowhere else so far. This means that we see entirely new and different scribal lineages early on in the "obscure centuries." It is not easy to date the appearances of the new family names Haiun and Bagania. Recall that Haiun was the clan name of one of the dead priests in the pre-1480 tragedy, according to Yuhana Šitlan's *tarik* testimony. Among the known clan names in *ZRK* we have ʿKuma and ʿAsikir, which now prove themselves as very ancient, around 1000 CE. Previously, the Baz clan was placed around 1100, and we can perhaps put the Baganias and the ʿAsakirs (ʿAsakir is also the scribe's Zihrun's own clan name) even a century earlier. Ṭruša I would place a bit later, in the twelfth century.

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[27] Sometimes spelled Bangania.

Beyond Zazai, Zihrun names priestly Lightworld figures as the first scribes, for the most ancient ones are "the fathers of the precious truth." To list Lightbeings as scribes is not uncommon; it is perhaps especially prevalent in esoteric commentaries.[28] Among the plethora of human names in his postscript, Zihrun identifies his father's three wives. He ends with a plea for salvation "from the sons of darkness, those of the root of the sons of blindness." "Everything is torn away from goodliness, except for treasure (*ginza*) and priestly wisdom (*naṣiruta*)," he laments.

* * *

It is in *Alma Rišaia Rba* ("The Great, First World": *ARR*), that we find an odd version of *Abahatan*, the great commemoration prayer, as noted in chapter 10. The names are entirely Lightworld ones, except for John the Baptist. Forgiveness of sins is asked for him in these words: "Yahia Yuhana, son of ʿNišbai Qinta, and his wife Anhar."[29]

ARR (*DC 41*) was copied by our old acquaintance Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, Kamisia, in 1809, in Šuštar. I will follow the colophon from the scribal slot of Zakia Šitlan, Bakšia—the father of Yuhana Šitlan, who was the author of Sh. Abdullah's *tarik*—to Brik Yawar's time (ca. 600). Here is a new row of scribes; many of them are not attested elsewhere. We find a few luminaries, and a couple of new clan names.

Zakia Šitlan (ca. 1450) copied from Bihram Šitil, son of Yahia Yuhana, of the Sumaqa ("red") clan. He, in turn, transcribed the text from an anonymous son of Yahia Adam, Riš Draz. The unnamed pupil and *his* scribal predecessor Zihrun Baktiar, son of Yahia Adam, are known only from this colophon. But the next name is that of the famous ethnarch "our master" Yahia Sam, son of Zihrun Hibil. In his lineage we find the names Furaih, Zarzuia, ʿAziz, and Dihdaria. Several families seem intertwined here.[30] Yahia Sam is the father-in-law of Dihdar Mhatam Bulbul, and we have encountered these men before, especially in *Ginza* contexts. They seem to appear somewhat early in *ARR*'s colophon, for I have previously assigned them to the fifteenth century or so. It is likely that we have on our hands copyings within a very few generations. But a text like *ARR* is not completely reliable in terms of dating scribes, for such a manuscript may be copied irregularly, depending on demand. Like other ritual commentaries, this one is illustrated.

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[28] Again, see chap. 13 below.

[29] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 28 (see chap. 10 above).

[30] There are conflicting sequences in Yahia Sam's lineage.

The next scribe, Bihdad Bayan, may be identical to transcriber no. 3 in *ZRK*, but no initiator is indicated. The time is close to that of Bihram BrHiia, who is absent in *ARR*'s scribal roster. Next comes the very prolific Sarwan Bulbul, son of Adam Bayan, Zarzuia—like Yahia Sam, above. Sarwan Bulbul is also entitled "our master." He is attested in at least four *Ginza*s, two *JB*s, *Sfar M.*, *ATŠ*, and *CP*. He copied *ARR* for the benefit of a man belonging to the Paiiš family. Here, Paiiš is clearly identified as a family name, although it is listed among the *malwašia* names, too. The name Paiiš tends to show up in colophons during a limited time period.

Sarwan Bulbul's scribal predecessor is the ethnarch Adam Abulfaraš, the first listed ethnarch in *CP* 170. His family name is Barubai, which reaches into Adam Abulfaraš's third scribal (i.e., "grandfather") generation. In *CP*'s colophon 6, Adam Abulfaraš's successor was Zihrun Baktiar, son of Adam "the Deaf" (Ṭruša). This man may be identical to *ZRK*'s scribe, but there "Baktiar" was missing. Using colophon 5 in *CP*, one may place Adam Abulfaraš near Yahia Baz and Anuš Maʿilia, around the year 1100.

In working on *ARR*, Adam Abulfaraš had an assistant (perhaps to make the drawings in the scroll?): Adam Zihrun, son of Yahia Yuhana Bihdad. With Adam Zihrun, we arrive on firmer ground, for he is well attested, and he occupies a "scribal grandson" slot vis-à-vis Anuš Maʿilia. This places him in the twelfth century.

From here on, we find two other scribes unknown from elsewhere. Then the colophon features an interruption, a statement by Brik Yawar. His testimony is worth noting, though it follows a recognizable, ritualized pattern. He confesses that he was afraid of this scroll, worrying that it might be counterfeit. Without success, he tried to drown it and then burn it, but neither water nor fire accepted it. So Brik Yawar had to conclude that the text was legitimate.[31] Ramuia, Brik Yawar's predecessor, has a statement, too:

> When this *diwan* fell into my hands from the Life I feared that it might be lost. I detached it (?) from a book and placed it in a *Diwan* (scroll). Let any person into (whose hands) this *Diwan* may fall conceal it and guard it so that the power of the Seven may have no dominion over him and that the Life may rejoice in him and Manda d̲-Hiia may grasp his hand in *kušṭa*.[32]

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[31] Ibid., 52.

[32] Ibid.

The rest of the scribes in the colophon follow a familiar pattern, at least in part. Both Ramuia and Šganda are identified by means of *maṣbuta* names, but Zazai is missing. Instead, we find Anuš, son of Naṭar, though Zazai is elsewhere a son of Naṭar. Anuš becomes identified with Anuš-ʿutra, which leads to Hibil Ziwa's *diwan*, and to the primordial document authored by the Great Life itself.

* * *

I now move to *DC 48: Alma Rišaia Zuṭa* ("The First, Little World"; *ARZ*), *ARR*'s companion scroll in Drower's edition. *ARZ*, from 1564, stems from Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan, Šapuria, of Šuštar. We know him as *Marsh. 691*'s scribe in 1529. He also wrote *DC 6* (an *ATŠ* manuscript), in 1557, but its colophon is clearly broken off and therefore not useful.

ARZ features two colophons, and I will use the second one,[33] which has very interesting phrasings and reveals several family relationships. I begin with a scribe just prior to Mhatam Zihrun, Kuhailia, Yasmin Mudalal's husband. As noted, this couple dates to the fifteenth century. The scribe is Mhatam Bayan, son of "a father of kings," Dihdar Zihrun, and he belongs to the Šaʿpurias (as does Adam Zihrun, *ARZ*'s scribe). Mhatam Bayan is unknown from other contexts, but his scribal predecessor is the illustrious, well-known Yahia (Sam) Adam, son of Zihrun Hibil, of the Furaihs. He "copied from two ancient *diwan*s," says *ARZ*.[34] One was his own, and the other belonged to the distinguished (but otherwise unattested) Dihdar Zihrun Yuhana, son of Yuhana, "whose name is Sumair Busʿaid, family name Gadana." As we see, here the document gives Dihdar Zihrun Yuhana's secular name. The text continues, "What was deficient in it, one of his friends completed, for it was in the handwriting of a teacher and his pupil."[35]

First, the pupil is named: Yahia Bihdad Abunaṣr, son of Humam. Abunaṣr and Humam are secular names. What are they doing in a colophon this early? We do not know, but one might wonder if there were artistic reasons for employing someone who appears to be a layman? In any case, the teacher was Mhatam Šaiar, son of Bayan Bihdad. He had copied the text from his own father: Mhatam Bihram, son of Mhatam Hibil Yuhana. None of these men are known from other colophons. Mhatam Bihram's grandfather's manuscript was the prior copy. The grandfather's name is Banan Bihram, son of Hibil, and he had transcribed it from his paternal great-uncle, Ram Ziwa Bayan, son of Banan Bihram. All are unknown, and no clan names are attached to any of the men.

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[33] Ibid., pp. 89–90.

[34] My rendering. Here, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 90, Drower's translation is unclear.

[35] My rendering, again.

Only with the next scribal link do we find some footing, for here is the ethnarch Yahia (Sam) Adam, son of Sam Saiwia. This puts us roughly in the ninth century. At this point, the text explains, regarding Yahia Sam Adam, that he

> copied from his maternal grandfather, Bainai, son of Zakia. And his mother was Haiuna, daughter of Yahia, and this *Diwan* was discovered with them and was from the handwriting of Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat who wrote it in the town of Ṭib.[36]

Ramuia copied from Zazai, son of Hawa and Naṭar, the text states. Enigmatically, the document continues, "And she (Haiuna?) made many copies of this *Diwan* and the Dukhranas."[37] From Haiuna to Yahia Sam, there is a virtual dynasty of ethnarchs, for we see ethnarchs in at least four successive generations, and all are related to one another.

In connection with the man of the doubled name, Dihdar Zihrun Yuhana, son of Yuhana (= Sumair Busʿaid, Gadana), we see that Gadana is a family name here (though it is also a *malwaša* name). And Busʿaid is a family name, too. Previously, I have placed the (so far) earliest attested Gadana around 1200, and we may now do the same with Busʿaid. The scribe Adam Zihrun's lineage, Šaʿpuria, appears in connection with Mhatam Bayan, with whom I started in *ARZ*'s second colophon. The clan name can be traced to the early fifteenth century.

ALF TRISAR ŠUIALIA

The translation of the title of the fascinating, huge, and somewhat unwieldy scroll collection *ATŠ* is *The Thousand and Twelve Questions*. Since Drower's translation and edition of it, no scholar has given it much attention. The scribe of the *DC 36* copy of *ATŠ* provides us, luckily, with the means to trace the Kuhailias in a way that would otherwise be impossible. Stemming from 1677, Šuštar, *ATŠ* was transcribed by Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia. (As I have noted above, *ZRK*'s scribe—a different man, from a different lineage and clan—copied *his* text in Šuštar in the very same year).

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[36] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 90.

[37] Ibid.

In chapter 7, on Yahia Bihram, I noted that he wrote his own name and those of his relatives into the blessings in Zakia Zihrun's *ATŠ*.[38] But it is important to recognize that Zakia Zihrun is the *real* transcriber of *DC 36*. Drower divided *ATŠ* into two books, with several sections, in order to show how the collection originally consisted of separate scrolls. One part of the text, book 2.7, is very similar to lines 970–1042 in *DMʿL*.[39] *ATŠ* has six colophons.

In the very long section of blessings,[40] Zakia Zihrun names a large number of relatives, including direct male ancestors in ten generations. Beyond those, there are four additional priestly ancestors, all Kuhailias. All of the male relatives can be correlated to those in Zakia Zihrun's initiation lineage. Zakia Zihrun lists the names of his own three wives, his siblings, parents, his (co)teacher, and many other people. There are breaks in the text, and Drower suspects that these derive from the hand of a different copyist (probably Yahia Bihram himself).

From Zakia Zihrun's grandfather on, we find the names not only of other male ancestors, but also of their wives and children, and of Zakia Zihrun's uncles and aunts. One rarely sees such a meticulous listing of relatives. Here is the full initiation lineage, consisting of fifteen men:

Zakia Zihrun, son of
Ram, son of
Yahia Yuhana, son of
Ram, son of
Yahia Baktiar, son of
Adam Mhatam, son of
Bihram BrHiia, son of
Adam Zakia, son of
BrHiia, son of
Baktiar, son of
Adam Bihram, son of
Yahia, son of
Adam, son of
Sam, son of
Ram, family name Kuhailia

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[38] Chapter 7 n. 8 above (Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 3 §§109–10.

[39] See my *Scroll of Exalted Kingship*, 52–55, 96.

[40] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 162–63 §§212–14.

Up to and including no. 11, Adam Bihram, these are Zakia Zihrun's direct ancestors. Many of them are known copyists. Ram, Zakia Zihrun's father, is the *Ginza* owner from whom Adam Paraš copied *Hunt. 6* in 1615. Ram is also attested as a *JB* scribe. The grandfather, Yahia Yuhana, is encountered in many places: *CP*, *Ginza*, *Šarh d-Ṭab*, *Šarh d-Qabin*, *JB*, and others. Then, Bihram BrHiia, Zakia Zihrun's great-great-great-great-grandfather, is none other than the luminary we have seen so often. Relying on information in other colophons, I easily conclude that this is the man I have referred to as Bihram BrHiia "the elder," as distinct from "the younger" BrHiia. The two BrHiias appear together only in the colophon in *Marsh. 691*, and they are identified as uncle and nephew. But here in Zakia Zihrun's lineage, both appear in a manner that complicates the matter, for the alleged "younger" BrHiia turns up in the great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather slot. So, something is awry here, and I am not sure how to assess the contradiction.

Between the two BrHiias comes Adam Zakia—whom Zakia Zihrun skips in his list of blessings—but who clearly should have been present as great-great-great-great-great-grandfather. Baktiar, also left out in the blessings, I take to be an ancestor: great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather. If one counts the "greats" in the blessing formula, this makes sense. The last one to be identified as a "great" (with eight "greats") is Adam Bihram.

The earliest recognizable scribe is no. 12, Yahia, son of Adam Kuhailia, who appears as transcriber in at least six *Ginza*s, one *JB*, and in *Diw. Ab.* Often, his name appears several times during the same period, within a generation or two. This demonstrates what I call "circular copying"—it proves that Yahia himself copied a text several times and that his texts were reliable, used by other scribes. With Ram, the last one, no. 15 in Zakia Zihrun's list, we can date the Kuhailias to the mid thirteenth century. Whether there are Kuhailias before that time remains to be seen.

Book 1.1 of *ATŠ* obviously carries the title of the whole collection. In the colophon after book 1.1, Zakia Zihrun reports that he has borne much persecution for the sake of his religion. He wrote the text from the copy of his own grandfather, Yahia Yuhana, of the early seventeenth century.[41] Bihram BrHiia, son of Adam Zakia, is next in the scribal roster, and he "endured much persecution from the planets," the text informs us. At this point, the scribal lineage veers off from the Kuhailias and goes to the *ganzibra* Yahia Bihram, son of Sam Yuhana, of the Buhaiirs. He is known from *CP* and *Marsh. 691*, and he belongs to the generation prior to Yuhana Šitlan, the writer of the *tarik* in Sh. Abdullah's *Pašar Haršia*. Now we are in the 1400s.

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[41] Drower's translation of the colophon (ibid., p. 158) is unclear in several respects.

Yahia Bihram copies from Mhatam Zihrun, son of BrHiia (according to Zakia Zihrun's lineage, this means BrHiia "the elder"). Mhatam Zihrun is the nephew of BrHiia, and he is the husband of the woman priest Yasmin Mudalal. Mhatam Zihrun is no direct ancestor of *ATŠ*'s scribe, in other words, though he belongs to the Kuhailias.[42] Now we again enter the Kuhailia scribal "stream," as it were (though only for a moment), as Mhatam Zihrun copies for the salvific benefit of Yahia Bihram, Buhaiir. Next comes a new scribe, Yahia, son of Bihram Zihrun, of the Masriqana ("harrows," "rakes," "combs") clan. This clan name is new to me, and its lineage has five links, beginning with Zihrun Gadana, Masriqana, datable to the thirteenth century.

Now follows a series of unknown scribes (except for *one*, it seems), including men of the Riš Draz and Dugaria clans. Two odd, juxtaposed copyists then appear: first, Yahia Adam Baliq Hiwia; second, Yahia Halal. Neither of them carries initiator indication, but one is a snake charmer[43] while the other one is dubbed "pure." Clearly, the colophon wishes to keep these two Yahias apart; neither of the two epithets can be interpreted as clan names. The snake charmer copied from the pure Yahia.

Next in the copyist line comes Zakia Yuhana, son of Sam Adam, of the Murania family. Another initiate of Sam Adam preceded Zakia Yuhana as copyist: Sarwan Bulbul, the biological son of Sam Adam. Sarwan Bulbul is attested as scribe in Paris *JB Ms. B*.[44] Sam Adam depended on Bainai's copy, and he says, "I have often copied this. I brought this copy for copying into this place, copying for a righteous man in the love of Truth."[45] We do not learn the name of the beneficiary. From Bainai on, the line of transmission is familiar, ending with Zazai and the First Life.

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[42] In terms of sequence, Mhatam Zihrun appears between the two BrHiias, whose generational relationship is now challenged by Zakia Zihrun's lineage.

[43] In a discussion with Mr. Sobbi, I pondered about the possible meaning of "*baliq hiwia*." Mr. Sobbi thought it might mean "he eats snakes," but I tended toward "snake charmer," which was confirmed by Prof. Stephen A. Kaufman (Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio; pers. comm., Sept. 14, 2001).

[44] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 289.

[45] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 159 §206.

Early clan names of interest here in the first colophon of *ATŠ* are Masriqana (13th century), Murania (ca. 9th century), and Dugaria (10–11th centuries).

Let me make an observation at this point. It looks less and less like a "narrowing funnel" of names from the earliest part of the obscure centuries; rather, we have separate, discrete copyist lineages, with new names and new clans. The copying is less frequent than in liturgies, and there are fewer scribes over large spans of time.

The next colophon in *ATŠ* comes after book 1.2, "The Explanation of the Body."[46] The copy that Zakia Zihrun uses is about two hundred years old, and it obviously belonged to the family treasure. It was written by Zakia Zihrun's great-great-great-great-grandfather: Bihram BrHiia, son of Adam Zakia. With this document, we discover an example of how old esoteric texts can be when they are copied. Described as a unique and anointed leader, the ancestor Bihram BrHiia endured persecution, reports Zakia Zihrun.

The scribal roster in this colophon is not long, with only four scribes apart from Zakia Zihrun himself. But it includes Bihram Šitil of the Sumaqas, known from *ARZ*'s list. Also, the Murania clan appears again, but with different names than in *ATŠ*'s first colophon. Ending with the Riš Draz *ganzibra* Yahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, this list presents us with a known scribe, for he is attested in other contexts. A statement follows—probably by Yahia Adam:

> O my brother-priests and Mandaeans that exist now and those that are to follow us (in years to come); (know that) there was no copy of this *diwan* that I am writing; it was ancient, worn and torn, but I wrote from it as well as I was able, examined it carefully and wrote.[47]

With colophon 1 in *CP*,[48] we find a link to Yahia Adam's father Yuhana Šitlan, for his grandfather's brother was Zihrun, son of Bihdad, of the Riš Draz.[49] Yuhana Šitlan's name occures several times in *CP*'s first colophon, and he may belong to the time of the woman priest Mariuaria. On the basis of evidence from her context, we can place Yuhana Šitlan in the early sixteenth century, and his initiate to the mid sixteenth. We do not know the provenance of "The Explanation of the Body," but it belongs in literature one may characterize as "kabbalistic." Why the scribal lineages end as early as the sixteenth century is unknown. If we are dealing with a cut-off colophon here, the scribe does not make it clear.

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[46] Ibid., 194.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, facsimile p. 97.

[49] Sometimes, Zihrun and Bihdad are conflated to *one* name.

ATŠ's third colophon, after the tractate "Wound and Healing" (on ritual impurity and its rectification), is very short and of no interest here. This part, book 2.3a–b, actually forms the first text in *DC 6* of *ATŠ*.[50] Colophon 5 is also very short.

But colophons 4 and 6 take us back to Ramuia and to Bainai. According to the first one, after "The Masiqta of Šitil,"[51] Zakia Zihrun copied the text from his grandfather, Yahia Yuhana, who copied it twice, first for himself and then for his children. He used a copy by Adam Zakia, son of Zihrun Bihram, Riš Draz. The Riš Drazes are also known by the name of Qindila ("lamp").

The two ethnarchs Yahia Sam, son of Sam Saiwia, and Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, appear in the scribal lineage. Bihram, son of Dmuia, turns up between the two ethnarchs, and his is a new name. The lineages in this colophon are few; the text is evidently copied very infrequently.

Finally, after book 2.7, "Concerning the Postulant's First Baptism," we have a colophon.[52] Zakia Zihrun again copies from his grandfather Yahia Yuhana, who in turn depended on a text by Mhatam, son of Yahia Bayan, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans. Mhatam is attested in a variety of texts, but only in this instance in *ATŠ*'s *DC 36* copy. He is the second copyist of the other *ATŠ* manuscript, *DC 6* (from 1557). When Zakia Zihrun copied *HG*— which follows on the last tractate in *ATŠ*, the one I am dealing with here—he copied directly from Mhatam.

Prior to Mhatam here in *DC 36*, there are copyists known from no other contexts. One of them, Anuš, son of Hibil, belongs to the Furaih clan. In this lineage appears a man with the nickname (or family name) Manzania ("hairy"). The others have no family names. Just before we reach the leader Yahia Sam, son of Sam Saiwia, comes Bihram Zuṭia ("the little one"). In this colophon Sam Saiwia appears as scribe in his own right, a completely new feature. Haiuna and her son Bainai then turn up, and their scroll "was kept in the library of Bihram Zihrun, son of Ram Ziwa." The library owner is unknown, but the initiator Ram Ziwa may be identical to the scribe found in *CP* and the *Ginza*. This Ram Ziwa was the nephew of two brothers, Šadan and Bayan Bihram, sons of Brik Yawar. In terms of time, such a connection seems plausible.

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[50] See p. 230 §102 in Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*; 195 n. 3; and Drower's explanation, 211.

[51] Ibid., 261. This is the special *masiqta* for someone who has died without the ritual wreath, the *klila* (see *MII*, 210–11).

[52] Ibid., 290. The text begins on p. 284.

Next, Haiuna and her son copied from Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, "for she [Haiuna] worked and labored zealously with them: (*hence it was written*) by the hand of both together. They were with the children of the world, the House that is unclean, (but) yearned for the Holy, and Life rejoiced for evermore."[53] This is phrased very cautiously, but it seems that Haiuna and her son are living and working in a Muslim environment. I suspect that the Mandaeans may have been thriving under the Umayyads (661– 750), perhaps enjoying unusual tolerance. It is during this time— and a bit later— that we find a dynasty of Mandaean ethnarchs, all related to one another.

As noted, Zakia Zihrun concluded his work in Šuštar, and he was in the house of the craftsman Nairuz, son of Hadat, of the Sabur clan. This man was the beneficiary of the first text in *ATŠ*. Zakia Zihrun names the governor of Šuštar, Fatih-ʿAli, son of Bagšlia-khan. The great ruler, the Shah, is Suleyman, son of Shah Abbas the second. "They call him 'Father of Disgrace' and his name makes kings quake," says the scribe. One of the Il-Khanids, Suleyman reigned 1666–1694.[54] Zakia Zihrun names the governor of Huwaiza: Maula Haidar, son of Maula ʿAli.

Finally comes a postscript in which the scribe informs the reader that he performed marriages and that his older brother, a priest,[55] and a younger brother, a *yalufa*, were with him. All of Zakia Zihrun's three wives had died, and so had the wife of his brother, the priest. "Our time was bitter and in no way pleasing," he says. "Is not grief (abundant as) water torrents or the leaves of trees?" he asks plaintively.[56] No scroll would be able to contain a description of the grief, he declares. Alarmingly, the affliction does not stem from the Muslims but comes "at the hand of children of our family (root)."[57] The nature of the internal Mandaean conflicts is left undisclosed.

In the last colophon here in *ATŠ*, we again see a series of new copyists. But there are no new family names. The absence of women copyists apart from Haiuna is striking. Indeed, women scribes seem to be absent from colophons in esoteric Mandaean literature. As noted, not only in *ATŠ*, but also in most of the textual colophons discussed in this chapter, we find distinct, parallel rosters of scribes during the obscure centuries. Attempts to simplify the copyist activities between 1400 and 700 will not do. *ZRK*'s list of scribes differs from that of colophon 4 in *CP*, *Marsh. 691*, and *ARR*. *ARZ* displays new names and lineages. Relatively few scribes are at work, all in all, but they differ from document to document. The copyists may employ old documents: regarding colophon 2 in *ATŠ*, we saw that Zakia Zihrun was indeed using a two-hundred-year-old text.

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[53] Ibid.

[54] See Bachrach, *Near East Studies Handbook*, 50.

[55] This is Yahia Yuhana; see Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 160 §210.

[56] Ibid., 291 §441. See *MD*, 104a, s.v. *duita*, for emendation of the translation.

[57] Ibid.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

For unknown reasons, when we reach about 1400—arriving from the "obscure centuries"—the scribal activity seems to intensify. Without recourse to other historical information, we can only speculate on why there seems to be a renewed vigor in copying. Is there a renaissance in Mandaeism at this time?

Additional Mandaean texts could be marshalled in order to supply other scribal lineages and family names between 1400 and 700, but I have decided to limit the number of consulted texts. To mention but one instance, the colphon of *DMʿL* testifies to the family name Šupartaiia, in a very early period, among the scribes there. *GL* and the liturgies supply other names,[58] and due to their nature, these texts feature more densely populated colophons. Because they stop earlier, the colophons in *GR* and *JB* are not as useful in the task of bridging the gap from about 1400 back to Haiuna and her contemporaries.

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As a conclusion, I supply a list of the earliest clan names from the textual materials treated in this chapter. I give approximate time designations regarding the earliest occurrences of the clan names.

Sh. Abdullah's *tarik*: Buhair, Zakia, and Zarzuia: mid thirteenth century
CP colophon 4: Daudania, Furaih, and Tutu: early thirteenth century; Gadana: around 1200; Ṭruša: twelfth century; Maʿilia, Baz, and Riš Draz: around 1100 (Riš Draz is also known as Qindila)
ZRK: ʿKuma, ʿAsakir, and Ba(n)gania: around 1000
ARR: Sumaqa: fourteenth century; Zarzuia: thirteenth century; Paiiš: twelfth century; Barubai: before 1100
ARZ: Šapuria: fifteenth century; Gadana and Busaʿid: around 1200

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[58] They can be found in the relevant chapters above.

ATŠ: Colophon 1: Murania: ninth century; Masriqana: thirteenth century; Dugaria: tenth to eleventh century

Colophon 3: Riš Draz (see above on *CP*). Colophon 5: Manzania ("hairy"): around fifteenth century

The reader will see that the colophons in *CP*, *ZRK*, *ARR*, and *ATŠ* stand out as having the earliest clan names, with Murania in *ATŠ* as the most ancient.

* * *

In the next chapter, I deal with the earliest colophons, those from early Islamic times back to Zazai (and beyond). My questions include: Are the scribal lineages the same in all of the early colophons? What types of texts carry such early testimonies? Family names fade away in the earliest period; instead, it looks like we find *maṣbuta* names. For some copyists, the colophons give both father's and mother's names.

PART 4: DISCERNING HISTORY

13 COMPARING THE EARLIEST COLOPHONS

INITIAL REMARKS

In the preceding chapter, I focused on what I dubbed "the obscure centuries." Now I descend further back in time in order to compare and correlate the earliest Mandaean colophons. Centering my attention on the most ancient scribes, I also reflect on the characteristics of the texts in which the earliest colophons appear. This results in a hypothesis of what earliest Mandaeism looked like, in terms of its textual materials, and here I emphasize evidence for original Mandaean religious features that other scholars have underestimated.

In a letter to Lady Drower of May 15, 1965, Rudolf Macuch refers to his soon-to-be-published article "Anfänge der Mandäer," saying that his own philological work supports the same conclusion as does Drower's, though she centers on investigations of Mandaean symbolism. Macuch's conclusion is that there was "a fully organized Mandaean community in the third century in southern Mesopotamia." At this point in my research, I myself have little doubt about this. My comparison of early colophons supports the conclusions of both Drower and Macuch but comprises broader evidence.

As noted in chapter 12, a dynasty of ethnarchs appears to carry the Mandaean communities and religion through several centuries following the emergence of Islam. Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 12 (= *Dmut Kušṭa*)[1] states that the ethnarch Bihdad, son of Zihrun, copied it from the *diwan* of his own maternal grandfather, Bainai, son of Zakia. We know that Bainai's mother was the ethnarch Haiuna, and the colophon in *Dmut Kušṭa* states outright that this is the case. Regarding Haiuna's manuscript of the scroll, the text states that "this *diwan* was with them [i.e., with Bainai and his mother] from a manuscript belonging to Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat."

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[1] The colophon of this text is treated at the end of the present chapter.

Ramuia witnessed the coming of Islam in 638, and Haiuna can be placed around 700. All of the mentioned scribes are Mandaean ethnarchs: Bihdad, Haiuna, Bainai, and Ramuia, and we know something of the family relationships of these four. Another ethnarch, roughly contemporaneous with Bihdad, is Yahia Sam,[2] son of Sam Saiwia, who also has Bainai as his maternal grandfather, according to *ARZ*.[3] So Yahia Sam, son of Sam Saiwia, and Bihdad, son of Zihrun, are either cousins or brothers. The latter is the more probable, since *CP* 170, in its list of ethnarchs, has Šadia[4] as the mother of both. But the two men have different initiators.

One might place *CP* 170's first listed ethnarch, Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, in the ninth century.[5] In the previous chapter, I put him around 1100, but I now consider this too late. *CP*, facsimile p. 97 (colophon 1) gives the lineage Anuš Bihdad, son of Yahia Sam (Adam), son of Sam Saiwia. Each of these may well be a leader of different Mandaean communities during a relatively limited time period, though Sam Saiwia is a *ganzibra*, not an ethnarch. I am marking the time of the two ethnarchs Yahia Sam, son of Sam Saiwia, and Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad—the early ninth century—as the era in which my interest in early colophons begins. So I will mainly concentrate on scribes prior to Anuš Maʿilia.

That Anuš Bihdad, the ethnarch Anuš Maʿilia's initiator, was the pupil of the ethnarch Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia, is an interesting piece of information, for it reveals a lineage of four scribes who are otherwise not listed in direct initiatory relationship in this manner. Sam Saiwia, who is usually not listed as a copyist, did, however, copy an *ATŠ* manuscript from Haiuna.[6] He is listed among the *ganzibra*s in *CP* 170. In the same *ganzibra* list, two men appear, Mhatam and Šitil, who are sons of Haiuna.[7] She seems to have illustrious sons apart from the ethnarch Bainai,[8] who in turn is the maternal grandfather of the ethnarch Bihdad, son of Zihrun. We can then insert Haiuna in the slot of great-grandmother of Bihdad, at least as an initiation, if not biological, designation.

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[2] His name varies; sometimes it is given as Yahia Sam Adam.

[3] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 90.

[4] Alternatively Zadia. The text is corrupt at this spot.

[5] He is the second ethnarch to be listed in *CP* 170, next to Adam Abulfaraš (see chap. 10 above). Yahia Adam is the third.

[6] Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 290 §438; see chap. 12 above.

[7] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 153.

[8] But are these her biological sons, and/or initiates? We do not know.

There are additional family relationships between many of the early scribes. For instance, one of *CP*'s colophons states that Bayan Hibil—who traveled around comparing *masiqta* rituals in early Islamic times—was the grandson of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.[9] And Ram Ziwa, son of Bihdad Bihram, was another grandson of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. Confusingly, this Ram Ziwa has a namesake, Ram Ziwa, son of Šaiar, but the latter Ram Ziwa has a bad reputation: "there was no truth in him," says a colophon in the Australian *Ginza*.[10] Zindana's lineage or family, which does not seem to include ethnarchs, appears to represent a different clan from the one reflected in the Bihdad–Bainai–Haiuna lineage. Indeed, one may see the lineages represented by Haiuna and Zindana as priestly dynasties founded by them. But Haiuna's successors comprise the ethnarchs, as her descendants enjoyed a near-monopoly on the office of ethnarch.

It is likely that no more than three hundred years separate Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, from the most recent ethnarch, Adam Abulfaraš.[11] The earliest Islamic centuries, then, were an enormously fertile time for the production of Mandaean copies of texts. This period embraces all Mandaean ethnarchs named in *CP* 170.

To summarize relationships so far, we see:

Bihdad, s. of
Zihrun, s. of

Yahia Sam, s. of
Sam Saiwia (g.s. of)

Bainai, s. of
Haiuna, d. of
Yahia

And prior to Haiuna, just before the emergence of Islam, we find ʿQaiam, son of Zindana. ʿQaiam is the maternal grandfather of Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar, and Bayan Hibil is the father of Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat.[12]

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[9] But are these her biological sons, and/or initiates? We do not know. *CP* 170 among the *ganzibra*s. Brik Yawar's mother's name is Buran.

[10] See chap. 3 above.

[11] That is, in terms of time, he lived later than the others, for *CP* 170 starts its lists with the most recent persons.

[12] Ramuia's is a *maṣbuta* name!

We find:

Ram Ziwa, s. of   Bayan Hibil, s. of
Bihram Bihdad,   Brik Yawar,
(son-in-law of)   (son-in-law of)
ʿQaiam, son of
Zindana

Both Ram Ziwa and Bayan Hibil are grandsons of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, but we do not have their mothers' names. Are the two grandsons brothers or cousins? Are Šaiar and Brik Yawar brothers? We shall see that one *Ginẓa* identifies the "bad" Ram Ziwa as yet another grandson of Zindana. A few relationships are stated as biological relationships, but others are probably initiatory. So far, only Ramuia's name is a *maṣbuta* name, but we shall see that his father's/initiator's name is attested in *MHZ* as Zihrun Naṭar.

Let me now turn to evidence in the earliest colophons. In sequence, I deal with *CP*, *GL*, *ATŠ*, *DMʿL*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *ZRK*, *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, *MHZ*, *Marsh. 691*, and *Dmut Kušṭa*.[13]

CANONICAL PRAYERBOOK

At this point, it is impossible to find evidence for family relationships between Ramuia and the scribes living before his time. Many copies of Ramuia's manuscripts were in circulation around the era of Haiuna, and even after her time. As noted earlier, four *CP* colophons end with Zazai as the earliest human copyist, the material covered by them being: colophon 1, *CP* 1–74, the baptismal, *masiqta*, and *ʿngirta* prayers; colophon 4, *CP* 104–69, the *rušuma*, the "Healing of Kings," the *rahma*s, and "Fruits of Ether"; colophon 5, *CP* 170–99, *Ṭabahatan*, Šumhata, priest initiation prayers; colophon 8, *CP* 305–29: antiphonal coronation prayers.[14]

Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia, has a statement at the end of the baptismal hymns (after *CP* 31). The baptismal liturgy's pedigree is illustrious: the prayers were written in Ramuia's scroll "The Great Wellspring." Yahia Adam reassures the reader that Ramuia's scroll, found in the possession of Haiuna, came to him, Yahia Adam, and that he changed nothing in it.[15] One may note that in *CP*'s colophon 1, Ramuia appears as scribe no less than three times. Three different men used copies of his: Ziqa, son of Ninia; Bainai, son of Zakia (and Haiuna); and Bayan Hibil, son of Brik Yawar. At the end of colophon 1 there are several statements, first, by Adam Sabur—another son of Ninia—who compares *masiqta*s and decides that the one he copies was the reliable one.

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[13] For greater detail regarding the following sections, see chap. 9 above on the liturgies.

[14] The segment *CP* 180–99 appears twice, before colophon 7 as well.

[15] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 32.

In another statement after *CP*'s first colophon, Ramuia gives valuable information by stating that 368 years have passed since Zazai's time. He also says that he, Ramuia, wrote the *Diwan* in the town of Ṭib, which, as we have seen, is very frequently associated with Ramuia, and also with his scribal predecessor, Šganda, son of Yasmin. Of special interest now—because the already mentioned ethnarchs seem to have lived within a few centuries of each other—is Ramuia's specification: "Anuš, son of Danqa, departed with the heads of the people, in the years when the Arabs advanced."

Bayan Hibil, a successor of Ramuia who used Ramuia's copy of the liturgy, says that he travels around, comparing texts and distributing them. Finally, Ram Ziwa,[16] son of Bihram Bihdad,[17] reveals that he has looked into Ramuia's text "The Great Wellspring." He sternly warns anyone against removing *zhara*s or committing other acts of change against the current work, the "Book of Gadana."[18]

Ram Ziwa, the last of the commentators, is not listed as a copyist of *CP*'s colophon 1. But he does seem to appear in colophon 3 (after the *ʿniana*s). Here we learn that he is a nephew of the frequently encountered copyists Šadan and Banan, sons of Brik Yawar, and that his *maternal* grandfather is ʿQaiam, son of Zindana.

Above, we have seen that Bayan Hibil's *maternal* grandfather is this very same man! Another grandson of ʿQaiam, son of Zindana, is the disreputable Ram Ziwa, son of Šaiar.

The priest Zindana—initiator of at least three initiates— appears frequently and can be dated firmly to the pre-Islamic period. Neither he nor his initiate ʿQaiam is a copyist in *CP*'s colophon 1.[19] Ram Ziwa, son of Bihram Bayan, along with his fellow-initiates, father, uncles, and great-grandfather Zindana, form part of a dynasty more or less parallel to Haiuna and her clan.

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[16] This is not the "bad" Ram Ziwa!

[17] Alternatively, son of Bayan Hibil. His lineage is inconsistent.

[18] All these statements are found in ibid., 70–72.

[19] However, Yuhana, son of Zindana, is recorded here.

Colophon 1 in *CP* lists six scribes between Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, and Šganda, son of Yasmin (a *maṣbuta* name): Yahia; Sam, son of Anuš Yahia; Bihram, son of Brik Alaha; Anuš Alaha; ʿQaiam, son of Šarat (a *maṣbuta* name); and Qaiuma, son of Brik Alaha. I have not found these intervening six scribes anywhere else, so far. Their time periods would fall between 638 and the 270s. Both Ramuia and Šganda carry *maṣbuta* names; in terms of time, Šganda is the scribal neighbor of Zazai of Gawazta.

CP's colophons 1, 4, 5, and 8 end in the same formulaic manner, with Zazai of Gawazta as the last human scribe copying from the First Life. Apart from the scribes listed between Ramuia and Šganda in colophon 1, all the colophons cohere at the end. One must assume that the major liturgies are in place from Zazai's time onward.

LEFT GINZA

The *GL* colophons in all eleven *Ginza*s that I have examined are identical at the end (except for the one that is cut off). There can be no doubt of *GL*'s high age. As noted in chapter 2, the myths in *GL* 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 center on the deaths of Adam and Hawa— with exhortations against mourning for the departed. *GL* 1.4 describes the soul's ascent through the *maṭarata*s. *GL* 2 contains twenty-eight stylistically uniform poems beginning with the proclamation "I am a Mana of the Great Life."[20] There are overlaps here with *CP* prayers. And *GL* 3, which consists of sixty-eight poems, concentrates on the destiny of the soul. Eight of these hymns are identical to *CP* prayers: *ʿniana*s, *masiqta* hymns, and one *ʿngirta* hymn.

Several women are included as scribes in *GL*'s colophon, and eleven scribal links exist between Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad, and Nšab, son of Maškna, son of Yuhana. Just prior to Nšab one finds the three sons of Brik Yawar: Bayan Hibil, Šadan, and Bayan Bihram. From these three sons further back in time are no fewer than thirteen scribal links. Starting perhaps around the year 200 CE and continuing to early Islamic times, *GL* was copied profusely. Ramuia is absent from this colophon.

An interesting feature of *GL*'s colophon is, as noted, that it does not include Zazai as a scribe, but it has one of his pupils, Ṭabia. Prior to him, there are four lineages, ending in the phrase "the father of Šlama, daughter of Qidra." This highly unusual and suspect "redescription" avoids having a female scribe as the very earliest, and it is consistent in all the *Ginza*s that I have studied. I place Šlama, tentatively, around the year 200 CE.

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[20] Note the similarity to the Valentinian Gnostic formula "I am a precious vessel." Historically, the Mandaean formula precedes the Valentinian one. See Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies*, 129, and chap. 15 below for his theories.

On the basis of the early colophons in *CP* and that of *GL* alone, it is obvious that a full-fledged Mandaeism, firmly anchored in liturgy and myth, exists in the third century of the Common Era. I now turn to other forms of literature, and many of the texts are those that scholars have routinely judged to be late or degenerate. However, a different picture of early Mandaeism may emerge as I present the features of the early colophons in these disparaged texts.

ALF TRISAR ŠUIALIA

I have alreay treated *DC 36*, transcribed by Zakia Zihrun in 1677, in Šuštar.[21] As noted, Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Zihrun, used this text when he copied *ATŠ* in the aftermath of the 1831 cholera and added his own *zhara*s and other commentaries to it.

The first part of *ATŠ*, book 1.1, in reality gives the name *The Thousand and Twelve Questions* to the entire collection. The textual segments—originally separate scrolls—with their respective six colophons, with the first scribes, are:

1. Book 1.1, "The 1012 Questions," ending with Zazai of Gawazta and the First Life
2. Book 1.2, "The Explanation of the Body," ending withYahia Adam, son of Yuhana Šitlan, of the Riš Draz clan (early 16th century)
3. Book 2.3a–b,[22] "Accidental Impurity and its Cure," ending with Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar
4. Book 2.4, "The Agreed Form of the Masiqta of Šitil; of the Dabahata and of the Dukhrana," ending with Bainai, son of Zakia
5. Book 2.5b," "Blow and Healing," ending, like no. 3, with Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar
6. Book 2.7 contains: a text on burial, a segment called "Of Postulants and Priesthood," and third, "Concerning the Postulant's First Baptism: Admonitions." The colophon ends with Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat.[23]

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[21] Chap. 12 above deals with Zakia Zihrun, whose lineage is extremely helpful in providing documentation for the scribes of the Kuhailia clan.

[22] This is the first text in *DC 6*. For discrepancies between *DC 36* and *DC 6*, see Drower's introduction to the collection (p. 3). Parts 3b and 5a are virtually identical to one another but are preserved as separate parts.

[23] After the last text, the *Haran Gawaita* follows.

Of these six, the colophon belonging to the first one is of primary interest, for it extends to Zazai. (The colophon is treated in chapter 12, in terms of the years between 1400 and 700). The earliest sequence of scribes is Ramuia, Šganda, and Zazai. The last is described as a son of Manda d̲-Hiia and as copying from the First Life.

The contents of *ATŠ*'s book 1.1 resemble parts of *DMʿL*, featuring the Lord of Greatness as a main speaker, impersonating the original soul. The Primordial Datepalm created the Lord of Greatness, says the text. Usually, the Primordial Wellspring is the partner of the Datepalm, but here she, the Wellspring, is the spouse of the Lord of Greatness. She also holds the position of mother of the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, the *abagada*. Posing a seemingly endless list of questions (perhaps 1012!), the prototypical priest Šišlam Rba interacts with the Great Nbaṭ, the father of the *ʿutra*s. Among the issues Šišlam Rba raises are Panja, the marriage ceremony, the priest initiation, the *rahma*s, and errors in rituals. Most of these features are familiar from parts of *DMʿL*.

In an injunction against forgetting to tie the sacred belt (*himiana*), in book 1.2, there is a reference to Zoroastrian rulers and to Christians—the fire-worshippers and those who set up a cross, respectively—but none to Muslims, Drower notes.[24] She thinks this part of the text derives from pre-Islamic times.

Part 7 of book 2 has a section that is virtually identical to *DMʿL*'s lines 979–1042, which is interesting, because *DMʿL*'s sole colophon *does* go back to Zazai and the First Life. But the pertinent colophon in *ATŠ* (i.e., no. 6) ends with Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat. It is quite possible, therefore, that the section "On the postulant's First Baptism" is much older than it seems if one judges it by *ATŠ*'s colophon alone.

Colophons 4 and 6 show strong similarities to one another, one ending with Bainai, and the other with Ramuia. In colophon 4, we find that Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia, is the immediate copyist successor to Ramuia. Haiuna is not a scribe in this colophon, but she is in colophon 6. Here, colophon 6 lists Sam Saiwia as a scribe in his own right, a rarity. According to these two colophons, Ramuia and Bainai copy from one another.

As a conclusion, Ramuia writes, "When I wrote this *Diwan* it was in separate treatises. I wrote them down and collected these reliable mysteries one by one, and combined them into fourteen writings."[25] He made them all into a single scroll. Addressing himself to future priests, Ramuia says of the scroll, "I have preserved it so that its beauty, fame and honor may be yours, and forgiveness of sins. And Life is victorious. Saka."[26]

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[24] Ibid. p. 177 §250, with n. 7.

[25] Ibid., p. 289 §434.

ATŠ as a whole represents a genre that can be labeled "esoteric commentaries." This type of literature presupposes the rituals and the mythologies. Texts such as *ATŠ* are, above all, interested in establishing Lightworld precedence for the correct performance of specific rituals. Detailed commentaries on the ceremonials, esoteric doctrines on the human body and on the alphabet, and long lists of potential ritual errors and their rectification are among the chief interests of *ATŠ*. As *ATŠ* readers, it is essential that we recognize the following: the part with the oldest colophon, book 1.1 of *ATŠ*, assumes an established priesthood, a tradition of esoteric knowledge reserved for a priestly elite, and the abiding relevance of such traditions. Non-Mandaeans and others unfamiliar with this type of literature may be exasperated with the seemingly hypothetical "what if" format of the numerous questions regarding possible ritual errors, and the meticulous listings of esoteric relevances of words, gestures, and sequences in rituals. Wrongly, prominent scholars have tended to judge sources such as *ATŠ*—wholesale—as decadent and late, demonstrating a decline from earlier, putatively pristine traditions.

Drower notes that *ATŠ*, book 1.1, is the longest scroll in Mandaean libraries, that it is frequently consulted, and it is always present in the *škinta* during priest initiations.[27] She considers the material in *ATŠ* to be old, possibly dating to the early Christian centuries,[28] and she comments on the scroll's close relationship to Jewish mysticism and Kabbalism.[29]

DIWAN MALKUTA ʿLAITA

The lone colophon in *DMʿL* bears a close resemblance to the three earliest colophons in *ATŠ*, but there are fewer copyists.[30] This text, beautifully illustrated, is extant in the West only as *DC 34* in the Bodleian Library. Before Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia, and his scribal neighbor Ramuia, son of ʿQaimat, there are only two other human scribes: Šganda and Zazai. And

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 3. This part of the book is carefully read by priests whenever thorny religious-legal questions arise.

[28] Ibid., p. 2.

[29] Ibid., p. 5.

[30] Ibid., p. 5 *The Scroll of Exalted Kingship*.

Zazai copied from the First Life. Strong affinities exist between *DMʿL* and the sections of *ATŠ* dealing with the ritual sequences in the priest initiation and with the esoteric meanings of segments of this ritual. Both texts deal with ritual mistakes, are interested in mystical correlations, and feature question-and-answer formats. Unlike *DMʿL*, *ATŠ* is unillustrated, apart from four concentric circles and a simple rectangle.

ALMA RIŠAIA RBA AND *ALMA RIŠAIA ZUṬA*

These short texts of ritual commentaries for priests are set in a framework of revelations by Lightworld beings. *ARZ* begins with a plaintive question: Why has priestly wisdom strayed so far from its ideal? Texts like *ARR* and *ARZ* are not quite handbooks, though the reader is taken step by step through rituals such as the *masiqta* and the *dukhrana*. Throughout, the emphasis rests on esoteric interpretations of gestures and words, so that the logic is "when you say word *x* in context *y* with gesture *z*, the effect is such and such on earth and in the Lightworld." Large parts of *ATŠ* and *DMʿL* demonstrate the same format.

Drower published the two scrolls *ARR* and *ARZ* together. Both are illustrated, *ARR* more impressively so, with birds, a profusion of trees and plants, the primordial Datepalm and the Wellspring (the Datepalm's female correlate), Lightworld denizens, and ritual objects.

Brik Yawar, the ubiquitous copyist of early Islamic times, reacted with fear to the scroll *ARR*, as we have seen in chapter 12. His standard formula expresses a priest suspecting a counterfeit text, a product of the dark forces, or a temptation from the planets and other sinister powers. That water and fire refuse to consume the scroll proves its Lightworld provenance. Ramuia, who had copied the text earlier than Brik Yawar did,[31] reacted to it in a more practical manner. He feared no dark forces but rather that the text might be lost. According to Ramuia's statement, the scroll originally belonged in a book. Ramuia places it in another context (by itself or in a collection similar to *ATŠ*?) and exhorts other scribes to guard the text. In turn, he claims, the text will guard the scribes from attacks by the seven planets.

Zazai is not a scribe in *ARR*'s list, but Anuš, son of Naṭar, appears in Zazai's slot. Anuš may be Zazai's brother or fellow-initiate, because other colophons identify Naṭar as Zazai's father. Anuš copied the text from Hibil

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[31] Though Bayan Hibil, Brik Yawar's pupil, lived earlier! The intervening scribal link between the two is Bainai, son of Zakia (and Haiuna).

Ziwa, who had it from the First Life. Šganda, son of Yasmin, appears as scribe between Ramuia and Anuš.

ARR's companion text, *ARZ,* has two colophons. *ARZ* was transcribed in 1564 by Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan. Adam Zihrun is a known copyist encountered elsewhere, and among the very earliest scribes whose documents are extant. The first colophon, after a brief part on the *dukhrana*, does not extend as far as Zazai but ends in this way:

> It was an ancient writing, by one (who was) a 'perfect,' Ram Ziwa Baktiar by name, son of Bayan Zihrun, son of Bihram. He was amongst the ancestors of Bihdad, son of Zihrun. And I found no copies (*of this*) except this one.[32]

Ram Ziwa Baktiar is attested as scribe only in this context, nowhere else. His ancestor Bihdad, son of Zihrun, however, is the well-known ethnarch and the maternal grandson of Bainai, son of Haiuna, as noted.

After an alternative form of the *dukhrana* ceremony (the "Dukhrana of the Unique One"),[33] the second colophon appears in *ARZ*. This one ends with Zazai—without any Lightworld copyists.[34] This colophon contains valuable information on family relationships, as we have seen in chapter 12.

In a September 27, 1964, letter to Lady Drower, Rudolf Macuch observes, "The *ARR* and *ARZ* contain no single Arabic word. How could a person acquainted with Mandaean literature and aware of the influx of Arabic words into Mandaic in Islamic times consider them as post-Islamic?"

And Drower notes that the script in the drawings after line 64 in *ARZ* shows peculiarities: "the q and the ṣ are archaic in form and resemble those used in early bowl inscriptions."[35]

ZIHRUN RAZA KASIA

ZRK ("The *Masiqta* of Zihrun, the Great Mystery"), the Bodleian Library's *DC 27*, was transcribed in Šuštar in 1677 by Zihrun, son of Yahia Mhatam. There are two, quite similar, colophons, and near the end they become nearly identical to one another. The second colophon says that the ethnarch Bihdad, son of Zihrun, copied from seven original manuscripts, but the identified copy is that of Bainai, son of Zakia. Only once before have I seen a situation in which a scribe makes use of no less than seven manuscripts: this was in *CP*'s first colophon, where Nukraia, son of Šitil, consults that many. However, *CP* documents the provenance of all seven.

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[32] Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 59.

[33] The text, ibid., 88–89, states that there are two other *dukhrana* ceremonies, celebrated by and for specific Lightbeings, obviously in times primordial.

[34] Ibid., 89–90.

[35] Ibid., 59.

The otherwise so frequently encountered Yahia Sam, son of Sam Saiwia, is not in evidence in *ZRK*'s second colophon. The copyist Bihram, son of Zihrun, is obviously a mistake for the ethnarch Bihdad, a conclusion justified by the placement of this name. He appears right before Bainai, who, together with Ramuia, Šganda, and Zazai, appear in sequence before we reach Hibil Ziwa as the first link to the Lightworld. But here *ZRK* becomes downright extravagant, for it lists a great number of Lightworld copyists prior to Hibil. Perhaps some of these belong among the aforementioned seven brothers of Hibil Ziwa. The common formula "*ansa mn*" ("copied from") is also used for the Lightbeings, who are: Haiašum, Abatur, Manda d̠-Hiia, Kušṭa,[36] Bihram the Great, and Bihram, the Precious *Kušṭa*. The last-mentioned person "copied from the garment that was with him, and the Great Father(?)[37] nurtured him."

ŠARH D̠-QABIN

Šarh d̠-Qabin d̠-Šišlam Rba ("The Explanation of the Marriage Ceremony of the Great Šišlam"), transcribed by Adam Yuhana, son of Sam Bihram, in 1802, has several colophons, most of which are not translated in Drower's edition. Instructions to the priest start the fairly slim volume—which exists in codex format, as I have seen it in use in a marriage ceremony in Iran. Most of the text contains the liturgy, and some of the songs carry a decidely secular tenor, with little or no recognizably Mandaean content. The wedding songs found in *CP* 215–32 occur here in *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, too. Section 4 contains a horoscope, "The Weekly Forecast of Hourly Fortune."[38] The text has no illustrations.

The colophons can be compared to those in *CP*, which was also copied by Adam Yuhana, in the very same year. The *Kd azil* series of hymns appear here, as they do in *CP* 233–56, but the difference in *Šarh d̠-Qabin* is that the colophon covering these hymns *and* the wedding songs *CP* 215–32 extends to Zazai. This is not the case in *CP*. So, the *Šarh*'s colophon after section 2[39] seems to prove that these hymns are older than they appear to be in *CP*. The sequence of copyists from Bainai on is very similar to *ZRK*'s, and Zazai and his father Naṭar are said to copy from the First Life. One can hardly prove that all of the *Šarh* is old, but the Zazai-derived colophon after the *Kd azil* hymns is instructive.

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[36] Here identified as Manda d̠-Hiia's father, but usually identified as female in mythological traditions.

[37] Text uncertain.

[38] Drower, *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, 97–102.

MAṢBUTA D-HIBIL ZIWA

Information on the lavishly illustrated scroll *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa* (*MHZ*) has already been given in previous chapters. Copied by Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, in 1831, this text contains, among other features, a version of the great prayer for the dead, *Abahatan*. *MHZ* has two colophons, one right after the other, though Drower only translates one of them in its entirety.[40] The text is broken off at the beginning, and I cannot account for the two colophons being so close together. They are not alike.

The first one, of which Drower translates only the end, has none of the familiar copyist names belonging in early Islamic times. Indeed, some of the scribes are unknown from other texts. But one, Yahia Šaiar, son of Adam Baktiar, of the Durakia clan, is attested in *ATŠ*, *ARR*, and *JB*. He belongs to a later period, the seventeenth century at the earliest. Between him and Adam Sumaqa, who copies from Bainai, son of Zakia, a mere four scribal links occur, which seems suspect. The colophon is obviously abbreviated. From Bainai on back in time, we meet the usual scribes, including Haiuna and Ramuia. Zazai copied from his father Manda d̲-Hiia, says the text, and the sequence of Lightbeings is: Šišlam the Great, Shaq the Great, Great Ether, Great Sprout (= Nbaṭ), Great Radiance, and Light-that-is greater-than-all-Worlds. Great Radiance copied from his own innermost mind and the garment that was in him.[41] One notes that this exuberant list is different from the roster of Lightbeing copyists in *ZRK*.

As in *ZRK*, the "garment," *lbuša*, appears as an element or characteristic in the uppermost world. This looks like the ancient Gnostic/Jewish-Christian idiom for the primordial self or soul, or, alternatively, for incarnation as opposed to transcendence. Why this mythic image appears in Mandaean colophons needs to be investigated.

In the second colophon of *MHZ*, two scribes not found elsewhere appear right after Bainai. The adjacent third link is Adam Zakia, son of Yahia

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[39] Ibid., 12.

[40] Ibid., 12.

[41] Ibid., 84 (translation slightly modified).

Yuhana, of the Sumaqa clan. He is attested in *CP* and can be dated around 1600, which strengthens the impression gained in *MHZ*'s first colophon: scribes are evidently missing between 1600 and Bainai, for Bainai lived almost a thousand years earlier. This is one of the few places where one may detect a clear break in a copyist lineage.[42]

Prior to Bainai, we find, in *MHZ*'s second colophon, Haiuna, Yahia Ramuia, and Ramuia. Differing from the first colophon, the second one does not have Zazai as a scribe. But he is mentioned in the context of a completely new person: ʿUda ("staff"),[43] son of Yuhana, who depended on "Šabur, son of Zazai, whose elder brother had copied from his teacher Nbaṭ."[44] Next comes another ʿUda, a son of Manda ḏ-Hiia, at which point we are certainly propelled into the lofty regions of Lightworld copyists. The rest of the list is very similar to the one in the text's first colophon.

Despite the extravagances of the early part of the colophons, the obviously broken lineages, and the abrupt beginning of the text *MHZ*, the text should be taken seriously as a valuable, historical document. It assumes the existence of the entire baptismal liturgy, describes the establishment of the baptism ritual's Lightworld model, and sets up Hibil Ziwa as the prototypical priest.

MARSH. 691

Centuries before the existence of the Bodleian Library's Drower Collection, *DC*, this exquisite little leatherbound codex, a collection of prayers, was there, copied in 1529 by Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan. It is the oldest Mandaean manuscript in a European library. The Englishman Thomas Marshall was a philologist, born in 1620 or 1621, died in 1685. Marshall's books were given to the Library by his servant in 1689 or 1690. Marshall may have obtained the current volume (together with his many other manuscripts) while in the Netherlands as Chaplain to the Merchant Adventurers, from 1650 to 1672.

Adam Zihrun is already known as the copyist of the *ATŠ* manuscript *DC 6* in 1557, and of *ARZ* in 1564. The Baghdad manuscript of *Diw. Nahr.* (from 1917) also attests to his scribal activities. *Marsh. 691* measures some 4 by 5 inches. To my knowledge, no scholars have studied the book. The first of its three colophons offers an excellent historical source, suitable for calculating scribal generations, as I showed in chapter 12. The first and third colophons extend back to a mythological, original copy: that of the First Life and of "the First Ancestors," respectively.

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[42] Another place is in one of the New York *Ginza*s, as noted in chap. 3 above.

[43] *MD*, 342b.

[44] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 86.

Anuš Maʿilia, son of Bihdad Zakia, appears in the first colophon, and he is the biological son of his namesake Anuš Maʿilia, son of Anuš Bihdad. Anuš Bihdad stands in a grandson relationship to Sam Saiwia. Anuš Maʿilia copied the text twice, and there is only one link between him and Bainai, son of Zakia. This link is Hibil, son of Yahia (Sam) Adam, son of Sam Saiwia. Bainai is here clearly identified, not only as Zakia's son but as Haiuna's. From there on, we find the regular lineage of Haiuna, Ramuia, Šganda, Zazai, with the latter copying from the First Life.

The second colophon, which does not extend back to Zazai, includes—among other prayers—the *Kd Azil* series. Likewise, recall that in *CP* and in *Marsh. 691* this series occurs in a part of the liturgies that are *not* covered by a colophon going back to Zazai. But in *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, the story is different, for here the hymns appear before a colophon that does stretch back that far. *Šarh ḏ-Qabin*, still, shows the ancient heritage of the *Kd azil* series. *Marsh. 691*'s second colophon is very brief and ends early, with Yahia Bihram, son of Sam Yuhana.

There are many similarities between colophon 1 and colophon 3. The ethnarch Adam Bulfaraš, son of Bihram Šitil, surfaces in the third colophon, and so does the ethnarch Yahia Adam, son of Sam Saiwia. Then Bainai appears, and the list follows the first one precisely, except that the primordial copy belonged to the "First Ancestors," not to the First Life.

At the end, Adam Zihrun says that the local leader of the Mandaeans in Huwaiza is Dihdar ʿId, son of Adam Bihram. The reigning sultan of the city is Badran, son of Palah, son of Mihsan, son of Mahdia.[45] Two Mandaean men put the collection of prayers in the proper order, according to Adam Zihrun, namely his own father, Bihram Šitlan, and his "brother-in-*Kušṭa*," Bihram Bayan, son of Adam Qušmana,[46] Manziana. "May the Light equip them and guard them and help them!" Adam Zihrun implores.

The master of "this *Ginza*," that is, the owner of the book from which Adam Zihrun copies, is Zakia Bayan, whom Adam Zihrun of course includes in his formulaic list of persons to be blessed and to be forgiven of their sins. Zakia Bayan's mother and his three wives are all named.

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[45] This information is very interesting, for it fits with documentation in Sheikh Abdullah's *tarik* from 1480, forty-nine years before Adam Zihrun copied *Marsh. 691* (see chap. 12 above).

[46] The second element of the name is so far unattested, and it is not in *MD*.

The most unusual feature of this postscript is that Adam Zihrun asks the First Life to protect the sultan and his family. According to *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, Badran—who came to power in 1514, fifteen years before Adam Zihrun's copyist date for *Marsh. 691*—remained loyal to the Safawid Persian power. This is the time of the Mushaʿshaʿ Shiʿite extremist rulers in Khuzistan, who tried to navigate between the Ottoman Empire and the Persians.[47]

Blessings bestowed on a Muslim leader are rare in Mandaean colophons. But we have actually seen such before, by the scribe Ram Baktiar, who copied *Ms. A* of the *Ginẓa* in 1560, in the village of Maqdam belonging to Huwaiza. He, too, called on the Mandaean Lightforces to protect his temporal leader, Sayyid Sajjad, who belongs in the generation adjacent to Badran's, in Adam Zihrun's time.[48] In contrast to Sayyid Badran, Sajjad steered closer to the Ottomans. In both cases, it seems that in at least part of the sixteenth century, the Mandaeans of Huwaiza enjoyed tolerable conditions under the *ghulat* (Shiʿa extremist) leaders. However, this conclusion must be tempered by Adam Zihrun's previous statement (as we have seen), to the effect that he is persecuted by the seven sons of the evil age.

MS. ASIAT. MISC. C 12 (*DMUT KUŠṬA*)

The scroll's full title, *Diwan ḏ-Qadaha Rba Šuma ḏ-Mara ḏ-Rabuta u-Dmut Kušṭa* ("The Scroll of the Great Exorcism, the Name of the Lord of Greatness and the Image of Truth"), seems unwieldy enough. I abbreviate it to *Dmut Kušṭa*. Among some Mandaeans, the title has been taken to mean that there are two scrolls, not one.[49] When I told Mandaeans in Ahwaz, Iran, that I had found the scroll in the Bodleian Library in March 1993, they were unaware of the text's existence. But Kurt Rudolph saw a copy in Dora near Baghdad when he examined a number of texts in a private library in 1969.[50]

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[47] Luft, "Mushaʿshaʿ," 673a.

[48] See chap. 2 above.

[49] This information comes to me from the *tarmida* Sheikh Haithem, New South Wales, Australia (pers. comm., April 1999). Sh. Haithem has now translated the scroll *Dmut Kušṭia*.

[50] Kurt Rudolph, "Quellenprobleme zur Ursprung und Alter der Mandäer," 166 n. 39.

As we have seen in chapter 5, the scroll was aquired through Drower in 1954.

Yahia Ram Zihrun, son of Mhatam, copied the text in 1818 in Qurna, on the Tigris. He is attested as copyist of other texts. Directly from his hand comes Ms. Asiat. Syr. C 13, *Diwan Razia ḏ-Abahata* ("The Scroll of the Secrets of the Ancestors")[51] and Ms. Syr. G 2 (R), which consists of the two phylacteries *The Rue* and *The Archer*, from 1815 and 1816, respectively.[52] Whether Yahia Ram Zihrun was among the priests who perished in the cholera cannot be determined at present.

Artistically most impressive, *Dmut Kušṭa* depicts an astonishing array of figures and geometric designs. A silkworm, a human being, a hornet, and salt are among the illustrations. There are also depictions of liver and spleen.

The fellow-ethnarchs Yahia (Adam), son of Sam Saiwia, and Bihdad, son of Zihrun, are among the early copyists, and they belong to the same generation, as we have seen. As in some other colophons, Bihdad is indicated as the grandson of Bainai, son of Haiuna. The *diwan* belonged to them, mother and son, the colophon says, from the heritage of "Ramuia, who wrote it in Ṭib." Zazai is the earliest owner, without any Lightworld scribal prototype for the scroll here.

Times are dangerous, says the *tarmida* Yahia Ram Zihrun, with battles, killings, and the priests thrown into exile. One *ganzibra* is dead, and among those in exile is Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, a *ganzibra* attested as scribe in *Diw. Nahr.*[53] Both men are banished. Yahia Yuhana is identified in *Diw. Nahr.* as having initiated eight novices. With both *ganzibra*s in exile, Yahia Ram Zihrun understandably declares, "At this moment, there is no *ganzibra* in the world." The supreme ruler is Daud Pasha in Baghdad,[54] the governors of Basra and Qurna being Bakir Aga and ʿAbas Aga, respectively.

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[51] This is glued on at the end of C 12; it was copied in 1823. Unpublished.

[52] There are other copies of these two, namely *DC 39* and *DC 47*. The latter was published by Drower, "A Phylactery for Rue."

[53] The *DC 7* manuscript, from 1843; see Rudolph, *Der Mandäische 'Diwan der Flüsse'*, 50, 59.

[54] Ruled 1816–1831. He was deposed by the Ottomans after the cholera (see chap. 7 above).

Examinations of the earliest parts of colophons in these texts, *CP*, *GL*, *ATŠ*, *DMʿL*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *ZRK*, *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, *MHZ*, *Marsh. 691*, and *Dmut Kušṭa*, show that Mandaean religion early on possesses a variety of literary genres. Liturgies and poems, the major rituals, and esoteric commentaries all presuppose and support a developed mythology. Creating a literature of esoteric commentaries seems to be a natural development in scribal traditions that place a high value on priestly knowledge, on the mysteries of creation, and on the minutiae of rituals. All the major Mandaean rituals are taken for granted in the commentary literature, and the mythological structures are firmly in place.

Keeping in mind that the colophons in these texts extend back to the third century (and, in the case of *GL*, even further), one is faced with the need to revise notions of earliest Mandaeism. (Precisely *when* we enter the Lightworld realm of heavenly copyists is usually easy to tell, but not always.) It would have been simple for Mandaean scribes to "invent" colophons in order to make a certain text seem ancient and prestigious. This might have seemed important, especially in the face of emerging Islam, when Mandaeans presented the *Ginza* as proof of their revealed religion. But central texts such as the entire *Right Ginza*, about half of the liturgies, and *The Book of John* do not seem to go back to earliest Mandaeism. At least we cannot prove so, on the basis of colophon research.[55]

Here is an overview of my findings:

- The colophons in *DMʿL*, *Marsh 691*, *Šarh d̠-Qabin*, and four of the eight *CP* colophons—nos. 1, 4, 5, and 8—end with Zazai d̠-Gawazta, who copied from the First Life. Zazai is mentioned either alone, or as son of his father Naṭar and/or his mother Hawa. Zazai lived around 270.
- *Dmut Kušṭa*'s colophon terminates with Zazai of Gawazta, son of Hawa and Naṭar, while *ARZ*'s colophon ends with Zazai, son of Hawa.
- Colophon 3 in *Marsh. 691* ends by stating that Zazai of Gawazta, son of Naṭar and Hawa, "copied from the First Fathers."
- The first *ATŠ* colophon, after book 1.1, ends with Zazai, son of Manda d̠-Hiia, and he (i.e., Zazai) copied from the First Life.
- *GL* has no mention of Zazai, but its colophon ends with a woman copyist: Šlama, daughter of Qidra (ca. 200).

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[55] But see the arguments by Säve-Söderbergh regarding the Mandaean prototypes for the Manichaean *Psalms of Thomas* (*Studies*, 85–166).

- *ARR*'s colophon ends with Anuš, son of Naṭar, who copied from Hibil Ziwa, who copied from the First Life.
- *MHZ*'s first colophon ends with Šabur, son of Zazai, son of Manda d̠-Hiia, while the second one goes beyond Manda d̠-Hiia, continuing to name mainly Lightworld beings as copyists.
- *ZRK*'s colophon ends with Zazai d̠-Gawazta, son of Naṭar, and he (i.e., Zazai) copied from Hibil Ziwa. There are additional Lightworld copyists.

The bulk of the texts covered by the oldest colophons testify to this fact: the Mandaean religion does not develop a commentary tradition because of late, "degenerate" diffusions from a putatively early, "pristine" form of Gnosticism unhampered by priestly speculative dimensions. Instead, the commentaries, with their exuberantly creative impetus and their kabbalah-like interests in esoterica, appear as part and parcel of the Mandaean tradition from very early on.

Scholarly stereotype must be blamed for the notion that the production of internal, Mandaean commentary traditions somehow spells a degeneration of the religion. One would hardly make the same conclusion about early Christianity. Internal exegetical traditions show that the Mandaean religion is in constant conversation with itself (and probably with other religions!), forging ahead into ever-expanding territories of speculation. Meaning and significance are open-ended, in Mandaeism as in other religions. One must accord to Mandaeism the right to expend its creative and exegetical energies early on and not see the commentary literature as a later accretion somehow detached from the "real" religion. But until now, evolutionary models based on a dualistic framework of "classical" versus "degenerate" features seem to have colored most scholarly theories on Mandaeism's "original" face. Next, I shall look at several theories in this respect.

14 ON THE AGE OF MANDAEAN TRADITIONS AND TEXTS

KURT RUDOLPH

Few scholars of Mandaeism have been eager to try to determine the age of the religion's various strands of traditions and texts. Lady Drower, for instance, shows little interest in these matters. But she respects the full range of the religion's literature, though she at times has to admit that parts of it make little sense to her.[1] In materials that she deems to belong to a younger stage, Drower often discerns ancient traditions, but she is not concerned with a systematic sifting of the old from the new.

In contrast, Kurt Rudolph has spent much time and effort precisely in this area of research. In her review of Rudolph's *Die Mandäer*, Drower warns against making assumptions on the age of Mandaean texts without careful examinations of the manuscripts in London and Oxford. She clearly feels that Rudolph has been neglectful in this respect, and she is puzzled by his tendency to assume that many texts are young and therefore to be dismissed as genuine evidence for Mandaean religion. Drower points out that much valuable, old material exists in fairly recently copied texts, texts that only *appear* to have a later date of composition. Moreover, she adds that the ritual commentaries, which are off limits to laypeople, contain the best evidence for the conservatism of Mandaean rituals such as the *masiqta*.[2]

Rudolph has done much to make distinctions between old and new material in Mandaeism, between a putatively older, more original, dualistic strain, and a more recent, monistic one. Likewise, he has attempted to determine which traditions contain historically reliable materials and which do not. Most of his conclusions are based on studies of terms and ideas, not on literary-critical text analysis.[3] Conglomerates, such as many of the creation myths, are dissected in order to reveal the earliest layers, and this task is guided, to take one example, by a program of sifting various terms for Lightworld beings. Such a method would make it possible to determine which terms are primary and which are secondary, Rudolph assumes. If a specific story contains mythological figures that, according to Rudolph's standards, belong to different literary and historical strata, it is necessary to show which ones genuinely fit the story and which ones are later accretions. In my view, such judgments are necessarily also literary ones, because they are based on what Rudolph finds meaningful and satisfying.

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[1] See, e.g., her introduction to *ARR* and *ARZ*, *Pair of Naṣorean Commentaries*, viii.

[2] E. S. Drower, review of *Die Mandäer*, by Kurt Rudolph, 478.

For instance, Rudolph sees a certain section near the beginning of *GR* 3, which deals with Lightworld emanations and creations, as an insertion into an older text, because it contains mythological items and events that are "alien to the context."[4] But this conclusion leaves out the importance of poetic style and of associative flow, so frequently encountered in Mandaean texts. The piece can in fact be seen as an organic, poetic unity. Rudolph's compartmentalizing seems too rigid. What is "alien to the context" often appears to rest entirely on the scholar's own esthetic sense. But because Rudolph has already categorized certain terms and mythological figures as younger, these cannot belong in an "old" text, in his view.

Rudolph's theories are to a large extent based on his evaluation of certain literary genres. Both *DMʿL* and *ATŠ* 1.1, which Rudolph judges to be younger texts, contain the figure "the Lord of Greatness," who in his estimation is not an original Mandaean mythological entity. Wherever the Lord of Greatness appears, we are dealing with a more recent text, according to Rudolph, and when putatively younger and older mythological entities turn up side by side in a myth, the story as it stands cannot be seen as an original, organic whole. However, as I have noted, both *DMʿL* and *ATŠ* contain colophons that extend back to Zazai's time. So, if one takes the colophons seriously, a standard different from Rudolph's would be necessary in order to estimate how old and "originally Mandaean" a text might be.

To take another example, John the Baptist is always considered as an accretion, a figure the Mandaeans "borrowed" only after their encounter with Islam. Historically, Rudolph claims, Mandaeans never had anything to do with the Baptist's disciples.[5] But how can we know this for certain? And what to do with John's appearance in texts that are covered by early colophons? Are these texts to be dismissed as secondary, as amalgams? Rudolph's assertion that the John traditions are late and "contradictory," and that the Baptist does not appear in any of the cultic contexts,[6] must be taken with a grain of salt.

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[3] See, e.g., Rudolph, *Theogonie*, 14. The *Ginza* is the primary subject of Rudolph's investigations.

[4] Ibid., 18; *GR* 3.69.10–13.

John appears in the prayer called "Asiet Malka," *CP* 105,[7] and in *Abahatan*, *CP* 170. The colophon for this section of *CP* is early, going back to Zazai. Some might argue that because both of these prayers are, in a sense, lists, it is possible that John's name could have been added at a later date. However, one might then be forced to doubt the "legitimacy" of any or all of the other persons—mythological or historical—in the blessing formulas. To dismiss John's inclusion in these prayers makes little sense; in my opinion, the prayers constitute ancient traditions, remembrances, and honorings of ancestors, both human and super-human.

GR 7 is a tractate devoted to John's wisdom teachings, and his name turns up in the formulaic introduction and at the very end. In both instances, his Arabic name, Yahia, appears, and it is possible that *GR* 7's exhortation could be attributed both to the prophet and to a Lightworld entity. So, *GR* 7 may well mark a younger, post-Islamic stratum. But John appears under the Aramaic name Yuhana in *GR* 2.1, 5.4, and 16.1.[8] According to the colophon,[9] none of these texts are early. The *GR* 2.1 section is a sort of "religious history" and the context is anti-Christian polemics juxtaposing Jesus and John. *GR* 5.4 gives the story of John baptizing Manda ḏ-Hiia and of John's death and ascent. John the Baptist's name is mentioned twice in the poem *GR* 16.1, which deals with the dangers presented by Ruha and her denizens. So these texts present John in a variety of contexts, and it is premature to assume that he is merely a late accretion in Mandaeism. The question still remains unsettled, in my opinion.[10]

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[5] E.g., Rudolph, *Die Mandäer*, 1: 253.

[6] Rudolph, "Quellenprobleme," 141.

[7] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook,* 106.

[8] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 51, 190–96; 383 §25; 386 §10.

[9] i.e., the first one in the *Ginza*, after *GR* 18.

[10] One of the most incisive treatments of the John traditions remains Viggo Schou-Pedersen's Danish doctoral dissertation, published as *Bidrag til an Analyse af de mandaeiske Skrifter*, esp. 19–45 and 211–13. Schou-Pedersen argues that the Mandaeans were originally early Christian heretics, and he provides a valuable analysis of much of the material available at his time. The entire question of Mandaeism's

For Rudolph, it seems imperative to establish rank, hierarchy, and sequence among the Mandaean mythological personages, to keep them all neatly separated. The quintessential soul, Mana, cannot, in the same text, simultaneously be a collective soul *and* rank above the entity called Life, in Rudolph's view.[11] In the case he marshals—*GR* 3—it becomes evident that Rudolph's rationalism runs counter to the piece's poetic style and rhythm.[12] Likewise, when Rudolph calls book 2 of *ATŠ* "an evidently younger hodgepodge,"[13] he fails to appreciate the very genre of the priestly ritual commentaries, as Drower pointed out in her review of his work.[14] Moreover, while the two colophons in book 2 of *ATŠ* do not take us back to Zazai's time, colophons in similar texts do. One must be careful, therefore, in summarily assigning a younger date to such documents.

Rudolph's distaste for the esoteric ritual commentaries is disclosed in his conclusion that these are products of priestly interferences in an originally "democratic" Gnosis, that they mark an ascendant, deplorable rule by clerics who usurp religious positions formerly open to all.[15] This seems to me to reflect a sceptical attitude toward hierarchy and a wish to construe a romanticized "pure and original" Gnosticism. (I return to this attitude in the section "Others" below, regarding a scholar who tries to explain away as late inventions the Mandaean titles and terms for priests.) However, along with the original democracy, Rudolph also assumes that there was an old—but later eroded—ascetic tendency in Mandaeism.[16] This idea seems to fit with a need to place Mandaeism in closer proximity to other, putatively ascetic, Gnostic systems. Mandaeism's anti-ascetic stance has often been a stumbling block to scholars who compare Gnostic forms of ethics.

For Rudolph, "early" means pre-300, for he assigns the label "young" to texts dating around 300–600. This is based on Rudolph's notion that Mandaeism reaches back into pre-Christian times,[17] although we have no firm evidence for this. For Rudolph, "young" always denotes "degenerate," but the literature covered by the term is by no means uniform, as we have

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relationship to early Christianity is due for a reevaluation. I return to some of these questions in chap. 15 below.

[11] Rudolph, *Theogonie*, 20.

[12] As already noted regarding *GR* 3; see the text at n. 4 above.

[13] Rudolph, *Theogonie*, 95: "ein offensichtlich jüngeres Machwerk."

[14] See n. 2 above, and chap. 13 above on the earliest colophons.

[15] Rudolph, *Theogonie*, 342.

[16] Ibid, 346.

[17] Rudolph, "Quellenprobleme," 139.

seen in the preceding chapter. Most of the *Ginza*, about half of the liturgies, and all of *JB* must be judged, according to Rudolph's standards, as "younger." This would fit with my colophon research, but I would not draw the conclusion that these texts were of lesser value.

The creation theologies, which Rudolph associates with Judaism, should be understood apart from the Gnosis-inspired emanation patterns in stories on the origins of the various worlds and their personae, he states.[18] Rudolph considers the oldest Mandaean cosmogony to depend on the Jewish-heretical exegeses of the Hebrew Bible's *P* source.[19] If one creator figure is active in a text, the genre is kept purer than if several entities are involved, it seems. For instance, Rudolph considers the exuberant *JB* 61–62's collective creation account as proof of the religious tradition's loss of poetic style and expressive power. Clarity is missing and the syntax is dry.[20] But other readers of *JB* 61–62 may arrive at a different conclusion. I fear that Rudolph's own literary presuppositions obstruct his view of the text and that his imposed standards regarding originality and "pure" Gnostic style rule the assessment of it.

Trying to sort out the various Ptahil traditions, Rudolph understands the myths featuring Ptahil as creator of the planets to be the oldest, while the planets as Ruha's and ʿUr's children presents another strain. Yet a third has the planets as cocreators of the world.[21] But the *masiqta* hymns in *GL* contain all three traditions, and *GL*'s colophon is the most ancient so far. What precisely makes the "Ptahil-as-creator" myth the oldest?

In the Prolegomena to his first volume on Mandaean religion, Rudolph expresses his opinion that it is impossible to fix the *Ginza* texts, their literary layers, or their original authors in terms of time. He discusses various scholarly views on this issue but concludes that the entire authorship is anonymous.[22] This may be so, but we do have hundreds of names of copyists and their lineages. And the *GR* texts, all of which can be placed around the time of the emergence of Islam, sometimes present evidence for much older material. Rudolph himself concedes that this is the case.

Referring to Lidzbarski, Rudolph notes that the four alphabetic hymns *GR* 12.2–5 testify to ḥ and ʿ as full letters, proving that these poems must

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[18] Rudolph, *Theogonie*, 339.

[19] Ibid., 342.

[20] Ibid., 343.

[21] Ibid., 164.

[22] Rudolph, *Die Mandäer*, 1:24–25.

date to a time before the fourth century.[23] One might note in this respect that *DMʿL*, in its little dissertation on various letters, speaks of "three kings who set themselves apart," and that two of these are the letters mentioned by Rudolph.[24] As we know, *DMʿL*'s colophon extends to Zazai of Gawazta. So again, even though *GR* 12 is among the texts with a colophon ending with Ram Šilai (around the time of the rise of Islam), segments 2–5 include ancient textual materials.

That Lidzbarski did not include the colophons in the texts he translated meets with understanding on Rudolph's part. He feels that Lidzbarski was correct, at least sometimes, in mistrusting the colophons.[25] Both scholars noted the occurrence of cut-off colophons.[26] But this practice is, in my experience, relatively rare. Moreover, it may be easy for someone who has not systematically examined colophons to underestimate their importance.

It may well be that the age of various parts of the liturgy cannot be determined with any certainty, as Rudolph holds.[27] But when he claims that the colophons in the *Qulasta* seldom extend back to pre-Islamic times, he is simply wrong. One wonders why Rudolph does not seem to take Zazai's date seriously. In a related vein, to consider the priestly prototype Šišlam Rba as a recent figure only secondarily attached to some of the rituals—as Rudolph asserts[28]—is contradicted by the colophons in texts such as *DMʿL*. Again, this judgment might fit with Rudolph's assumption that the development of the priesthood is relatively late.

As Rudolph lists the main Mandaean texts, one by one, in "Die mandäische Literatur," his negative views of priestly commentaries such as *ARR* and *ARZ* become clear. He uses phrases such as "difficult to comprehend" and "bizarre expressions."[29] Originating in the eastern habitat of the Mandaeans, this literature is characterized by an "interpretation of ceremonial proceedings as profound or banal mysteries."[30] But one might well ask, Who decides whether these are "profound" or "banal"? Along with *ARR*, *ARZ*, and other documents, *ATŠ* is summarily judged to be younger. However, the margin for the terms "old" and "new" is wide and inconsistent. Regarding the Mandaean astrology book *Sfar Malwašia*, for instance, Rudolph regards the time of transition between "old" and "new" to extend over nearly a thousand years: from the sixth to the sixteenth century![31] Elsewhere, for Rudolph, "old" mainly means pre-300, as noted above.

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[23] Ibid., 19, with discussion. The reference is to Mark Lidzbarski, "Die Münzen der Charakene mit mandäischen Legenden," 83.

[24] Buckley, *Scroll of Exalted Kingship*, 59.

[25] Rudolph, "Quellenprobleme," 124. See Rudolph's unchanged views in this respect, in "Die Mandäer heute," 167 n. 12.

[26] See Rudolph, "Die mandäische Literatur," 169.

[27] Ibid., 149–50.

[28] Ibid., 151 n. 11.

[29] Ibid., 154, for example.

[30] Kurt Rudolph, "Zum gegenwärtigen Stand der mandäischen Religionsgeschichte," 146.

Unlike Macuch,[32] who insists that the compilation of texts such as the *Ginza* and the liturgies came about as a result of internal religious needs and pressures, Rudolph feels that Islam forced such collections to be formed, and that such "canonization" of volumes from separate scrolls rescued the texts from extinction.[33] Why, then, have scrolls continued to exist? Rudolph himself has examined many, for instance in Iraq in 1969.[34] Precisely these scrolls—which Rudolph so often dismisses as testimonies to the priest-ruled, younger stratum of Mandaeism—would then mark the loss of an older strain when all were egalitarian Gnostics, if one holds to Rudolph's view. A contributing factor was the Mesopotamian, monistic notion replacing the more genuinely Gnostic older dualism.[35]

Looking for reliable history, Rudolph considers the emigration legend in *HG*. The document's information on heresies and on rifts in the community is taken seriously, but the emigration tale itself has virtually no value, he determines. Here, Rudolph resorts to a series of antithetical, categorical judgments of *HG*'s contents: "The valuable next to the inferior, the elevated next to the laughable, the old next to the new, or heretical next to what later came to be the ruling position of the officially recognized (material)."[36] Moreover, he observes, the "florid fantasy" of Mandaean literature has prevailed until the present time.[37]

On a more somber note, Rudolph and others have often deemed the Mandaeans to be close to extinction, though Rudolph admits that, so far, his has been a premature pronouncement.[38] At the present time, when the continued existence of Mandaean communities is endangered (especially in Iraq), one should note that Mandaeans themselves have begun to take part in the study of their own traditions. Scholars may expect changes in traditional scholarship marking Mandaeism mainly as a striking example of a curious "survival."

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[31] "Die mandäische Literatur," 161.

[32] See the next section for Macuch's views.

[33] Rudolph, "Zum gegenwärtigen Stand," 136–37.

[34] See, e.g., Rudolph, "Die mandäische Literatur," 166 n. 39.

[35] Rudolph, "Zum gegenwärtigen Stand," 144.

[36] Ibid., 145.

[37] Ibid.

RUDOLF MACUCH

The scholar working most closely with Mandaeans, mainly in terms of the language traditions, while trying to glimpse the religion's early history, was the foremost linguist in Mandaic studies, Rudolf Macuch.[39] His is a voice, an interest, and a temperament quite different from Rudolph's. Macuch accepts without hesitation the Mandaeans' own tradition that they originally emigrated from Jerusalem,[40] and he considers the Mandaeans to have lived in Khuzistan since the second century,[41] with their poetry dating back even to the first century CE.[42] Mandaeans were firmly established over all of Mesopotamia before the end of the Parthian dynasty, and their departure from the valley of Jordan had happened already under Ardban III (r. 12–38 CE), according to Macuch.[43] Rudolph puts that exodus later, under the reign of either of two later kings by the same name.

In a reaction to Macuch's "Anfänge der Mandäer," Rudolph calls it "pathbreaking,"[44] but he remains highly sceptical toward most of Macuch's theories about the age of the religion and of its texts. Rudolph feels that Macuch naively overrates the enduring character of the religion's basic teaching.[45] But Macuch sees no reason to doubt the unbroken transmission of the religion, and he gives credence to the colophons in documents such as *ATŠ*, *ARR*, and *ARZ*.[46] Indeed, Macuch calls for a systematic investigation of the Mandaean colophons as representing genuine historical sources. "A close study of the colophons may give us more information about the history of Mandaean literature than this literature itself," he declares.[47] Macuch also wonders whether Zazai should be considered an original author of many of the texts. Also, Macuch notes that the documents traced back to Zazai show no Islamic influence.[48] Macuch is wrong, however, in stating that no Mandaean colophon extends farther back than Zazai,[49] for *GL*'s colophon consistently has an earlier lineage—one that in fact leaves out this ancient scribe, as we have seen.

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[38] Ibid., 148 n. 125. This article was published in 1973. Thirteen years earlier, Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 2, calculated that the Mandaean religion would exist for about fifty years more. Mandaeans do not accept converts.

[39] For linguistic arguments in the debate on Mandaean origins, their literature, technical terms, and history, it is advisable to consult all of Macuch's published works, as referred to in the present chapter and elsewhere. Macuch died in 1993.

[40] Macuch, "Gnostische Ethik und die Anfänge der Mandäer," 258.

[41] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 140.

[42] "Gnostische Ethik," 260.

[43] E.g., *Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic*, lxvii, and "Gnostiche Ethik", 258–59. See chap. 15 below for the Ardban question.

[44] Rudolph, "Quellenprobleme," 125.

[45] *Theogonie*, 348 n. 1.

Regarding the priestly commentaries, Macuch holds them in greater esteem than does Rudolph. Macuch admits that the people who wrote these texts were no poets, that the language of the scrolls is "tiresome and obscure," but that they have their own special, symbol-ridden logic that is partially beyond the grasp of European scholars trained in Western philosophical traditions.[50] He also points out that there are no Arabic loanwords in the esoteric priestly commentaries and that they must therefore have been written before the rise of Islam.[51] Moreover, their contents are too complicated to have originated in an oral tradition; this is a purely scribal heritage.[52] To me, this is a very intriguing insight. Macuch's views of this literature mark a distinct departure from Rudolph's.

Especially striking is Macuch's reliance on *HG* as containing grains of historically valid material, even though he accords this legend only 5 percent's worth of historicity.[53] He notes that the town of Ṭib, in Wasiṭ, is known as "the city of Ašganda" (=Šganda) already as early as 554.[54] This would be prior to the time of the clustering of ethnarchs during and after Haiuna's era, according to my colophon research. But there is little reason to assume, as Macuch does, that Anuš bar Danqa was among the ethnarchs near the time of Ramuia.[55] Anuš bar Danqa is not listed as ethnarch in *CP* 170, or in other versions of *Abahatan*. Ramuia's testimony in *CP*, on which Macuch's argument relies, reads, "I wrote this *Diwan* in the town of Ṭib in the years when Anuš son of Danqa departed with the heads of the people (ethnarchs), in the years when the Arabs advanced."[56] Note that Anuš bar Danqa accompanies the ethnarchs, but he is not said to hold this office himself.[57]

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[46] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 159–60.

[47] Macuch, *Handbook*, lxvii.

[48] Ibid,. lxvi.

[49] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 163.

[50] *Handbook*., lxv.

[51] Ibid., lxv, lxvi.

[52] Ibid., lxvi.

[53] See, e.g., Macuch's vigorous reaction to Yamauchi's theories in "Gnostische Ethik," 263–64.

[54] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 164, with references to Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 108–12.

Ṭib's being a busy scribal center in the years around Islam's emergence might support Macuch's conviction that the collection of Mandaean texts was a result of internal pressures. The ordering of the texts did not come about because the Mandaeans hurriedly needed to present a sacred book to the Muslims who required such in order to grant them "*ahl al-kitāb*" status.[58] Macuch holds that the main part of Mandaean literature was already in existence in pre-Islamic times, and that the *Ginza* had been edited in its final form around the second half of the sixth century. *ATŠ*, too, he places in pre-Islamic times.[59] However, he draws no specific conclusions about the possible identity of the *diwan*s that Bayan Hibil says he saw in various places.[60]

The priestly hierarchical system was already in place and fully developed in pre-Islamic and early Islamic times, says Macuch. However, when he adds that the titles "*ganzibra*" and "head of the people" were more prevalent in earlier times,[61] he may not be correct, at least not with respect to the title "*riš ama*." Macuch's judgment may reflect a form of romanticism—though it marks the opposite end of the spectrum when compared to Rudolph's notion of an early, priestless Mandaean democracy.[62] Further, Macuch claims that true *naṣiruta* died in the 1831 cholera, when laypeople were compelled to take over the leadership.[63] This is hardly the case, as we have seen in the examples of Yahia Bihram and his cousin/brother-in-law Ram Zihrun. Both were sons of priests and evidently well trained. Several other priestly sons and *yalufa*s survived the cholera, according to Yahia Bihram's testimony. Macuch's near-dismissal of post-1831 Mandaeism is therefore out of place, I fear, and it would not be taken lightly by the religion's present-day practitioners.

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[55] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 178–79.

[56] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71.

[57] Macuch confuses the relationship between Haiuna and Bainai, thinking that the latter is Haiuna's husband: "Anfänge der Mandäer," 181.

[58] Ibid., 184.

[59] Ibid., 183–84. *JB*, however, belongs to a much later stage, according to Macuch (ibid., 184). In "Die Mandäische Literatur," 152 n. 13, Rudolph says that Macuch informed him, in a letter of April 30, 1973, that the Oxford Scroll F—the part of the liturgies used by Lidzbarski for his edition of them—can no longer be found in the Bodleian Library. This is not correct, for it is there, accessible as Ms. Syr. F 2 (R).

[60] Ibid. 182, regarding Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 71. Here, Macuch corrects Drower's translation. That Bayan Hibil "took many *diwans* from place to place" (Drower), Macuch renders "approached many *diwan*s …."

[61] i.e., pre-Islamic and early Islamic; see "Anfänge der Mandäer," 183.

Given to hyperbole, Macuch, in "Gnostische Ethik," makes the bold assertion that one has to be blind not to see that the New Testament's Gospel of John is "saturated" with "'Mandaean'" elements.[64] Perhaps less startlingly, Macuch considers Mandaeism to be the foundation of Manichaeism, which is partially explained as an ascetic reaction against Mandaean religion.[65] After the discovery of the Cologne Mani Codex (which tells of Mani's life),[66] things may look a bit different in terms of the origins of Manichaeism, though there is no doubt about the Manichaean use of Mandaean poems. As noted in chapter 2, Torgny Säve-Söderbergh researched this issue a long time ago, and Carsten Colpe continued it.[67] Parts of *CP* 129 and 155, for example, are reflected in *Psalm of Thomas* 13. Both of these belong to the *rahma*s, a liturgical section having a colophon reaching to Zazai.[68]

OTHERS

The long unfashionable idea that the Mandaeans originated in Babylonia, and that their Jewish or Gnostic traits are secondary, is now again ascendant, it seems. Edwin Yamauchi's decades-old views are found in works such as *Gnostic Ethics and Mandaean Origins* and "Some Alleged Evidences for

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[62] Perhaps a personal inclination is evident here: Macuch himself was an ordained Lutheran minister.

[63] "Anfänge der Mandäer," 185.

[64] Macuch, "Gnostische Ethik," 267. Macuch wisely puts "Mandaean" in quotation marks. See also ibid., 256, 265.

[65] Macuch, *Handbook*, lxvii.

[66] Koenen and Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex*.

[67] Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies*, and Carsten Colpe, "Die Thomaspsalmen als chronologischer Fixpunkt."

[68] See Colpe, "Die Thomaspsalmen," 82–85.

Pre-Christian Gnosticism."[69] Macuch is at times vituperous in his review of Yamauchi's book,[70] and those who are interested in the clash between their theories may consult the works of Macuch and Yamauchi. I do not deal with Yamauchi's views here, but Edmondo Lupieri has revived the "Babylonian origins" thesis, and I briefly address his arguments in the next chapter. Also, Macuch's former student Christa Müller-Kessler is favorable toward the "Babylonian" argument, but on firmer philological grounds than Lupieri.[71]

Now and then one comes across statements such as Michael Morony's, to the effect that the Mandaean religion came into being only in the seventh century, that they were originally Chaldaeans, and that the Mandaean "sorcerers became white-robed, hereditary, sacrament-administering priests."[72] The author obviously has a low view of priesthood. Morony's book was published in 1984, but in the section on Mandaeism there is not a single reference to Rudolph or to Macuch. The author is mostly interested in the so-called "magical" literature of the Mandaeans and obviously has neglected to consult any other form of Mandaean writings.

Perhaps the most peculiar view of Mandaeism's allegedly late acquaintance with John the Baptist comes from J. H. Crehan, who claims that Mandaeans, in the sixteenth century on the Persian Gulf island of Hormuz, became so tired of listening to a visiting Armenian bishop's stories of Jesus' miracles that they "began to interpolate their own sacred books with rival miracle stories about John."[73] This, Crehan feels, is a good argument for the late adoption of John the Baptist into Mandaeism. I reserve further comment on Crehan's claim.

William Guy Oliver wrote a dissertation at Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1967, "The Mandaean Tarmid: The Growth of a Priesthood." Oliver argues for a late development of the priesthood and for the baptism and *masiqta* rituals. These rituals, he says, originally needed no priests. Oliver's views are permeated by hostility toward religious officials and by "original democracy" romanticism. The author searches for early uses of terms such as "*tarmida*" and argues that at the beginning stages of the Mandaean literature, the term simply means "disciple."[74] But the term exists in documents where "*tarmida*" clearly refers to a religious official, for instance in *ATŠ* book 1.1.[75] This is, as we have seen, part of the early commentary literature, in this case in the format of the seemingly endless lists of possible ritual errors and their rectification.

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[69] Published in 1970 and 1974, respectively.

[70] Macuch, "Anfänge," is an extended review of Yamauchi's work.

[71] See her "Mandaeans and the Question of Their Origin."

[72] Michael G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, 415.

[73] J. H. Crehan, "The Mandaeans and Christian Infiltration," 626.

[74] Oliver, *Mandaean Tarmid*, 84–85.

Oliver sees *GR* 2.1 as referring to self-baptism in the section where the text instructs the official to open up the Jordan and let the water flow freely.[76] Oliver seems to have little sense of Hibil Ziwa as priestly prototype or of earthly priests as intermediaries. The Great Šišlam, Oliver claims, is a figure invented by priests in order to legitimize themselves; hence the figure is a recent accretion.[77] But we know from *ATŠ* and *DMʿL* that this mythological entity is old. *MHZ*, in Oliver's view, knows baptism only as self-immersion,[78] and the *masiqta* originally constituted a priestless community ritual.[79] How would Oliver imagine the *masiqta* without religious officials? Much twisting of evidence is necessary in order to fit Oliver's theses.

He considers the Mandaeans to have been heretical Jews who in their southern Babylonian habitat "slipped" from their original stringency and became dependent on the priesthood. The very idea of a priesthood, and its attendant vocabulary, is attributed to Iranian and late Babylonian influences.[80] But how would the religious community have survived until then? Oliver does not say. Again, we see the prejudice that "real Gnostics" originally needed no leadership. Oliver notes the irony that those least knowing ones, namely, the "Mandaeans"—originally meaning "those who know" — in the hierarchical sense came to identify "laypeople." At Mandaeism's beginning, though, the term "*naṣuraiia*" referred to everybody in the group, he says.[81] This last argument might indeed have some value, but Oliver provides no firm historical basis for it.

Among certain scholars, there seems to be a tendency to make Gnostics—and perhaps particularly the Mandaeans—into a kind of idealized proto-Protestants, happily egalitarian and democratic at the outset, but later sliding into hierarchical social structures. Conveniently, one perhaps forgets that neighboring Gnostics such as the Manichaeans surely survived as long as they did precisely because of their tiered society. In fact, a full-scale comparison of the social arrangements of Mandaeans and Manichaeans still remains to be done.

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[75] *ATŠ*, 1.1; Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions,* 144 §132, see the transliterated part, ibid., p. 35.

[76] *GR* 2.1.48, p. 36; Oliver, *Mandaean Tarmid*, 62–64.

[77] Ibid., 97–98.

[78] Ibid., 8.

[79] Ibid., 84–85.

[80] Ibid., 367.

[81] Ibid., 256, 220.

CONCLUSIONS

Among the Mandaeans, a social structure, with priests, and a tradition of "rabbinic," mystery-laden style of elaborations on myths and rituals was in place quite early. The Mandaeans had no need for political power or statehood and did not aspire to "liberate" Jerusalem or any other center, but broke decisively with all larger religious frameworks to be only themselves, set apart from Jews, Christians, and others. The Mandaeans insisted that they came from Adam, they held onto the original revelations (which were interpreted in a Gnostic manner), and they were soon loath to mix with outsiders in marriage or to set store by converts. All others may have diluted or otherwise misunderstood the original message from the Lightworld, but the Mandaeans held on. Their writings firmly testify to this conviction. The polemical parts of the literature, as religious-political evidence, are still in need of a thorough scholarly examination, a project that might emphasize the Mandaean politics of identity and the religion's labor of self-preservation.[82]

In order to tell themselves who they were (and are), the Mandaeans wrote profusely, created ever more mythologies, preserved and elaborated on the rituals, equated purity with bloodline (though at some early point they must have accepted converts), and kept to themselves. Without the priesthood, the religion would not have survived even for a century. The scribal traditions among the priestly classes can hardly be overestimated: the sheer volume and detail of the *tarik*s support those traditions. Precisely here is the *laufa*—the connection between Lightworld and Tibil—one of real people, through the centuries.

Moreover, the very genre of the commentary literature must be taken seriously: it is ancient and it constitutes an integral part of the early religious foundations. Texts such as *ATŠ*, *ARR*, *ARZ*, *MHZ*, *DMʿL*, and others show how the religion constantly converses with itself, how it keeps alive, how its intellectuals understand their tasks. Indeed, I consider this genre of texts to furnish the glue between myths and rituals. The esoteric commentaries mesh past with present by means of ritual, and the above is linked with the below. In a sense, the commentary literature forms yet another *laufa*.

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[82] See Shapira, "Manichaeans (*Marmanaiia*)."

It is possible that a stereotypical, dualism-based "myth versus ritual" view has determined most scholars' striking distaste for the commentaries. But this is precisely where we see the energetic community leaders at work. What could be more welcome than to have, directly from the religious elite, a profusely documented testimony to its own self-understanding? But the prevailing scholarly view has limited the privilege of philosophical-practical theology only to certain (other) religions. The Mandaean commentary literature can be seen as practical metaphysics, an internal tradition that began early in the religion's history. Far from being "late" or "degenerate," this literature presupposes and enlivens the mythological and ritual foundations. The scribal intention may well have reflected a need to prevent dualistic stagnation, indeed to overcome—by way of philosophizing—the distance between the "ideal" and the "real."

In a conversation with the Mandaean *ganzibra* Sh. Salah in Ahwaz, Iran, in the spring of 1996, I was exhorted to inform my American academic colleagues that I had now seen the proof of the Adamic origin of the Mandaeans. The evidence was, Sh. Salah specified, the presence of purely natural objects in the Mandaean wedding canopy: the clay receptacles, the fruits, and the cotton garb of the celebrants inside it. While I explained to Sh. Salah why my colleagues in Gnostic studies would hardly accept the current presence and use of these items as historical, Adamic proof, I certainly also appreciated the *ganzibra*'s point. To his credit, he could also see my angle, so we left matters there, in an atmosphere of mutual respect, mindful of the difference between the religious and the scholarly view. Of course, it is Sh. Salah's view that "works" in the Mandaean universe, while I—at best a sort of "honorary" Mandaean—must be conscious of my position as scholar, and therefore "outsider."[83]

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Were one to take the insights gained from colophon research, pair it with scholarly results so far, add information from *HG*, and investigate the view that the Mandaeans may have wandered eastward from the Jordan area, a plausible picture might emerge. In the next chapter, I pursue a few points in the debate on Mandaean origins. In light of my colophon research, it will be useful to emphasize sources and ideas that in my view have received insufficient attention.

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[83] For an example, see my *Mandaeans*, chap. 6.

15 MATTERS OF HISTORY

HARAN GAWAITA AND ARDBAN

I begin by drawing attention to *HG*'s sparse colophons, to the Mandaean emigration tradition as found in *HG*, and to the tangled evidence regarding the Arsacid king Ardban. Next comes a consideration of Edmondo Lupieri's thesis of Mandaean origins and early history. Then I turn to the old (and neglected) ideas of the Danish scholar Viggo Schou-Pedersen. The possible connection between the Mandaeans and Jewish Christianity is considered next, exemplified by a study produced by the Israeli scholar Shlomo Pines. I conclude with some "possible scenarios."

As noted in chapter 13, *HG* was attached as the last scroll to *ATŠ* (*DC 36*), which comes from the hand of Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia, in 1677, Šuštar. Another *HG* document is *DC 6*, from 1859, written by the cholera survivor Ram Zihrun, son of Bihram Sam, of the clans Kupašia and Durakia, in the Mandaean quarter Margab of Suq es-Šuyuk on the Euphrates. A third *HG* belongs to Mr. Sobbi in Flushing, New York; it was copied by Saʿad, the grandfather of the current *ganzibra* of Ahwaz, Sh. Jabbar. It dates from 1930 and comes from Ahwaz.

Zakia Zihrun says that he made three copies of *HG* from his own copy, and that he wrote it originally from a scroll belonging to Mhatam, son of Yahia Bayan, of the Dihdaria and Sabur clans. In *ATŠ*'s last colophon (colophon 6), Zakia Zihrun states that he had copied that text from his own grandfather, Yahia Yuhana, who, in his turn, depended on that of Mhatam, son of Yahia Bayan. With this name, *HG*'s colophon ends, and Zakia Zihrun tells the reader than Mhatam possessed only this one copy. Thus we have no information about *HG* scribes prior to about 1600.

The colophons in the two other *HG* documents end with the very same scribe, Mhatam. *DC 9* stems from Ram Zihrun, as noted, and it has five copyist lineages, and Mr. Sobbi's *HG*, from 1930, has the same number of lineages but of course not the same scribes. In both *HG*s, Zakia Zihrun occurs as a copyist, and Mhatam precedes Zakia Zihrun directly in Mr. Sobbi's document. In *DC 9*, we find intervening scribes. Here Ram Zihrun states that he did his work in the courtyard of the *mandi* in Margab, so we know that there was a cult hut there. Recall that Petermann witnessed Yahia Bihram performing rituals in Margab just a few years earlier![1]

Ram Zihrun says that he put *HG* together by using seven *diwan*s and working together with his "brother-in-Truth," the *tarmida* Mhatam Yuhana, son of Adam Yuhana. This priest's secular name is Sheikh Šukar, son of Sh. Fulad, and he is none other than the copyist who made the little prayerbook Ms. Syr E 15 (in the Bodleian Library) in Margab a decade earlier.[2] We remember that Mhatam Yuhana was disheartened when his colleagues in Šuštar declined payment from him for their scribal services. Mhatam Yuhana may be among the *yalufa*s who were made priests in the aftermath of the cholera, and he seems to have stayed in contact with Ram Zihrun. His secular name, Šukar, means "sweet" or "sugar," a contrast to that of his father, Fulad, "steel"—perhaps a hint of distinct personality differences between the two.

That Ram Zihrun had access to seven copies of *HG* in 1859 means that the text was still extant and popular. But the very short roster of scribes may demonstrate that the text has been lost in its incarnations prior to about 1600, for it is difficult to assume that the document originally stems from such a late date. Looking at *DC 9*, it becomes clear that the formulaic beginning, before *HG* proper starts, is anterior to *DC 9*. The formula segment is ancient, broken, and glued on—but in calligraphic handwriting.

Indeed, *HG* is marred by numerous double circles at its beginning, usually a sign of a broken text. Many scholars suspect that the start of the text is unreliable, though I am not so sure of that (the entire *HG* needs a retranslation). *HG*'s scanty colophons have never been used as an argument in dismissing the text completely as a historically valuable source. Macuch's enigmatic declaration that HG must be taken seriously, even though it contains only 5 percent historical validity, raises the question: which 5 percent?[3]

Macuch voices exasperation with Drower regarding *HG*, because she has mixed up her references to the two manuscripts of the text several times, confusing Macuch no end.[4] He considers *HG* to be one of the worst preserved Mandaean texts. Most of Macuch's review of Drower's edition and translation is taken up with corrections of her translation, and I deal with some of his emendations here (others have been treated in previous chapters, especially in chap. 7 on Yahia Bihram).

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[1] See chap. 6 above.

[2] See chap. 4 above.

[3] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 117; "Gnostische Ethik," 258, 263–64.

[4] See his review of *The Haran Gawaita* and *The Baptism of Hibil Ziwa*, 359.

It is generally assumed that *HG* contains a version (or *versions*) of the Mandaean emigration legend from Palestine, according to which the Mandaeans left Jerusalem because of persecution from the Jews. That the Mandaeans had their origin in Jerusalem (or at least in Palestine) has remained a highly debated topic (I return to this issue below). *HG* begins, seemingly in the middle of a sentence, with the words "and Haran Gawaita receiveth him and that city in which there were Naṣoraeans, because there was no road for the Jewish rulers."[5] But Macuch, striking both "and"s, corrects this to "Haran Gawaita received him, that city in which there were Naṣoraeans, …."[6] So Macuch sees this statement as an uninterrupted piece of information. Still, who is meant by "him"? Lupieri thinks the text refers to Moses.[7] But there is no specific reason for such a conjecture.

The very term "Haran Gawaita" means "inner Haran." "Inner" (vs. "outer") in Mandaeism is a frequent expression for "mystical" or "hidden." Haran Gawaita is then a mythologized place; Macuch sees it as a sort of "Civitas Dei."[8] But what if it is not a mythological place, but Haran, the famous town near the present Turkish–Syrian border? Unlike many other scholars, J. B. Segal regards the arid town of Haran as a highly unlikely place for the water-loving Mandaeans.[9] Others think that the Mandaeans went to mountains of Media, in northwest Iran.

There is a bewildering number of places named Haran/Hauran, among them an area east of Damascus, an area west of Jebel Hauran, and also a larger locale in Bashan/Aurantis.[10] But I suggest a new possibility for *HG*'s Hauran: the long Wadi Hauran, a seasonal river beginning near Jebel ʿAneiza (3068 feet)—on the Jordan/Saudi Arabia/Iraq border. From the mountain range Jebel Hauran (= Jebel Druze), northwest of Philippopolis (i.e., Bostra), to where Wadi Hauran starts is some 155 miles due east. The wadi is a watercourse finally flowing into the Euphrates between Jadida and

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[5] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 3. Oddly, in a very recent printing of *HG* in Baghdad with an Arabic translation, the word "*šarh*" ("scroll") is added to the first sentence of the text proper, so that it reads "the scroll Haran Gawaita received him." There is no reason for this "emendation."

[6] Macuch, review, 359.

[7] Lupieri, *The Mandaeans*, 155 n. 37.

[8] Macuch, review, 360.

[9] See J. B. Segal's review of *Gnostic Ethics and Mandaean Ethics*, 135.

[10] See the map of Palestine in Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, *A Bible Atlas*, 156–57.

Khan Baghdadi. The named river is present on a 1956 National Geographic Society map, on a very detailed map published in 1977, and on a current roadmap of Iraq.[11]

At first, the Mandaeans may have followed Wadi Sirhan, which flows south-southeast from near Philippopolis, south of Jebel Hauran. From there, they headed toward Jebel Aneiza, and Wadi Hauran begins just east of this mountain. For baptizers, it would have been important to follow wadis in their flood season. Wadi Sirhan belonged to Nabataean territory, and so, probably, did the beginning of Wadi Hauran. In 36 CE, Herod Antipas and the Nabataeans were at war, but at that time the Mandaeans would have escaped the Nabataean area.[12]

I propose that *HG*'s "Inner Hauran" may be a mythologized Wadi Hauran. So, againt Macuch, I do not see his translation (though it is an improvement on Drower's) as a final answer. What Drower and Macuch render as Haran Gawaita receiving 'him" or "it" may be a reference to the wadi receiving someone (the people/ king Ardban?) from the city where the Mandaeans lived.

Looking for a river named Hauran in the liturgies, we see that in *CP* 28, a baptismal hymn called "The Greater 'Bound and Sealed'," Drower mistranslates a part of the text as

> these souls who descended to the jordan and were baptised. By Hauran-Haurararan, the out-thrust of the Great Life: by Its names, by Yufin Yufafin.[13]

It *should* read,

> these souls who descended to the Jordan and (who) were baptized in Hauran-Hauraran, the Radiance. The Great Life proclaimed its names: by Yufin-Yufafin."

Doubling of syllables, such as we see here in Hauran-Hauraran and Yufin-Yufafin, is quite common in Mandaean names of Lightworld entities.

In *CP* 49, the large and important *masiqta* prayer that joins spirit and soul at the death of the body,[14] the text says,

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[11] See respectively John O. LaGorce, ed., "Lands of the Bible Today"; Wilhelm Berg, *Historical Maps of Ancient and Near Middle East* (map no. 21); and *Iraq: Map for Businessmen and Tourists.*

[12] See Fergus Millar, "Empire, Community, and Culture in the Roman Near East," 146.

[13] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 23.

> she that emanated from a … of Life, with the Outer Life, with Hauraran and Karkawan-Ziwa.[15]

Here also correcting Drower, I suggest the translation

> she who emanated from the Image of Life into the Outer Life, into Hauraran and Karkawan, the Radiance.[16]

I take Karkawan to be a "mythologized" Karka, the river in Khuzistan. One may recall that this part of *CP*, which includes *CP* 28 and 49—a baptismal prayer and a *masiqta* prayer, respectively—is covered by a colophon going back to Zazai. When *MD*, 201a, identifies *karkauan* as "a spirit of light," I cannot agree. It is a Lightworld image of the earthly river Karka.

Hauraran appears in *GR* 15.2 and *GL* 3.60, and in both instances, it looks like a mythologized Lightworld place.[17] In the "Abatur's Complaint" section of *JB*, the Lightworld messenger comes to the wailing personified balance (for weighing souls), Abatur, and says to him, "The living water has emerged from Hauraran the Great."[18] Finally, in *CP* 379, a long prayer of blessing, the blessing is pronounced "in the Jordan and in the land of Hauraran."[19]

Now, to return to *HG*'s text very briefly, after the statement about "Inner Haran" the text immediately says, "because there was no road for the Jewish rulers."[20] For the moment, let me leave the Jewish rulers aside and instead concentrate on what follows, namely, the sentence "Over them was King Ardban."[21] Until recently, scholars reckoned with five Arsacid kings named Ardban/ Artabanos.[22] The entire question of Mandaean origins and emigration routes has for years focused on *which* Ardban *HG* means. Macuch and Rudolph debated this for decades, and others have joined the discussion, too.

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[14] It is used in *masiqta*s and in priest initiations (see my *Mandaeans*, chaps. 8 and 9).

[15] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 43.

[16] Note that with respect to both Hauran and Karkawan, we find the epithet "Radiance," as in the commonly encountered Fras Ziwa, "Light-Euphrates."

[17] Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, 302 line 28, 593 line 23.

[18] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 232 line 17.

[19] Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*, 298.

[20] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 3.

[21] Ibid.

[22] See Rudolph, "Die Mandäer heute," 169 with n. 17.

According to fairly recent interpretations made on the basis of numismatics, four Ardbans occur in the Arsacid list of kings, not five.[23] Wiesehöfer emphasizes the role played by religious minorities (he includes the Mandaeans) in pre-Islamic Iran, and he stresses Aramaic as the *lingua franca* from the Achamenid times onward. It was a popular language under the Parthians (from the beginning of the second century BCE to the emergence of the Sassanids).[24] If, as Macuch holds, the Mandaeans already had an alphabet in the first century in southern Mesopotamia, it is worth keeping in mind the established fact that the Middle Iranian script-systems were dependent on Aramaic script, of which the Babylonian ("Square") Hebrew and the Mandaic script are offshoots as well.[25]

Ardban II (i.e., formerly designated as Ardban III) ruled around 11–38 CE. He made an inscription in Susa, in Greek, in the year 21, to the archons of the city, and in 35—when his power was increasing—he "threatened in boastful and menacing terms" ("prahlerische Drohungen") to retake Mesopotamean territory that then belonged to the Romans.[26] Wiesehöfer assesses various Roman historians in order to sort out Ardban's multifarious political programs. In a revolt in Seleukia, the Parthian Tiridates took the side of the natives—that is, Babylonians, Syrians and Jews—while Ardban seems to have favored the Greek aristocracy. However, the conflict was primarily between these factions, less so directly between the two rulers.[27] Later first- and second-century Jewish revolts and pogroms in Mesopotamia are of no relevance to Ardban II, says Wiesehöfer.

Now turning to Ulrich Kahrstedt's early, detailed study of "our" Ardban, we see that the author fills out the picture considerably.[28] The Semitic masses in middle Babylonia could not be suppressed, and the Greek rule became increasingly a token one. Ardban had a history of siding with Jews: he helped—and was aided by—the Adiabene king Izates, who had converted to Judaism, and Ardban also sided with a Jewish guerilla-leader in Neerda on the Euphrates. On the Western flank, Ardban had to deal with the Romans and their supporters, and, on the other, the mightly Indian king Gundaphor, whose rule extended far into eastern Iran. In the north, in the various small states around the Caspian Sea, Ardban—himself a northerner—tried to keep things under control and to forge support systems, while the rogue and restless states around the southern tier of Persia and the Gulf had schemes of their own. All of this is vividly described in Kahrstedt's detailed, valuable, and even entertaining book, depicting Ardban in his historical and geographical context.[29]

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[23] See Josef Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia*, 314.

[24] Ibid., 7, 118.

[25] Ibid., 118; Macuch, "The Origins of the Mandaeans and Their Script," 186.

[26] Ibid., 169, 184; *Ancient Persia*, 122, 132.

[27] Ibid. p. 196; *Ancient Persia*, 142.

[28] Ulrich Kahrstedt, *Artabanos III und seine Erben.*

For my purposes, the point of all of this historical information is that Ardban never had anything to do with Palestine, and therefore could not have helped the Mandaeans flee the Jews from that locale. It is much more likely that, as a mini-campaign, Ardban aided the Mandaeans to security across the Tigris during the revolts in the mid to late 30s, when Ardban's powers were rising. From there, the Mandaeans went to the mountains of Media. The Mandaeans were therefore, perhaps, indigenous to Babylonia, in which case my Wadi Hauran thesis, as presented above, seems to fall flat. However, I am not quite prepared to give it up, and I will return to the topic later. Most important, the Mandaeans were seen—at least for a while—as a part of the Jewish population in Babylonia. I will return to this, but for the moment, let me mention that when Josephus wrote about the Jews in Babylonia (in the early 70s), he could not have included the Mandaeans among them, because they were in Media by then. That the Mandaeans considered themselves to be Jews, up to a crucial moment, is attested in *HG*, as we shall see.

Perhaps the most pressing query is, Why do I place my bet on Ardban II as the rescuer of the Mandaeans? Simply: Ardban I is too ancient, ruling for the very few years 128–24 BCE. We have no reason to put the Mandaeans that early. "Our" Ardban II ruled 11– 38 CE. He is the one that Macuch always argued for, and here I side with Macuch, but using arguments different from his. Ardban III (r. 79–81), has been tempting, in part because of the post– "destruction of the Jewish Temple" time connection, but this Ardban ruled too briefly to be involved with any Palestinian Mandaeans, who would have been far from his territory, if they did originate in Palestine. Ardban IV, Rudolph's favorite, is too late, and if one supports the "Palestine origins" thesis—which both Rudolph and Macuch do—one must still ask what an Arsacid king is doing so far to the West.

Again I turn to the text of *HG*. Immediately after stating that Ardban was their ruler, the text says that the Mandaeans abandoned the Sign of the Seven and went to Media, "a place where we were free from domination by all other races."[30] That means: the Mandaeans abandoned Judaism before they departed for Media. This may make sense, especially in the aftermath of the Jewish revolts in Seleukia. There were divisions in the Jewish community—whether before or after the chaos in the time of the rebellious Jewish leader in Neerda on the Euphrates. All of this happens in the mid to late 30s (Ardban dies in 38). *HG* says that the Mandaeans stayed in Media until "they came to their end." This does not necessarily imply extinction, but more literally: "they were completed," or "they endured."[31]

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[29] See especially his summary, 78–83. Kahrstedt's maps are also extremely useful.

Then the *HG* text states that the Mandaeans loved Adonai until Christianity arose,[32] the "crucial moment" indicated above. The text now turns into anti-Christian polemics for a bit. In terms of textual sequence, it looks as though the Mandaeans now have a second reason—quite apart from the political chaos—for abandoning Judaism: the Christian influence. Historically, both may be valid reasons, and I soon return to Mandaeism's acquaintance—and possible brief "flirtation"—with Christianity. For now, it is enough to say that the early Christian Thomas tradition associated with Ardban's contemporary and opponent, King Gundaphor of India, is probably irrelevant to the Mandaeans. But they were in contact with other forms of Christianity.

HG turns to its John the Baptist legend (which I omit in the current context but return to later), and then the document lists seven Mandaean leaders installed by Anuš-ʿutra, at the command of Hibil Ziwa.[33] Several of these persons are identifiable. First, Zazai is installed in Baghdad. Here he has a mythologized father: Hibil-ʿUtra. Next, Papa, son of Guda, belongs on the Tigris and at the mouth of the Karun (in Iran). He is not identifiable, unless one may see him as Papa Anuš, who owned one of the seven copies of the liturgies consulted by Nukraya in *CP*'s first colophon. A man named Pappa is mentioned by Theodor bar Koni (8th c.) as the leader of the sect of the Kantaeans, one of the Babylonian groups associated with the Mandaeans.[34] For historical reasons, I doubt that bar Koni's Pappa can be identified with either of the two Mandaean men named Papa.

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[30] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 3.

[31] Lupieri, *Last Gnostics*, 157, thinks they died out, which seems dubious.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 10.

[34] See Dirk Kruisheer, "Theodore bar Koni's *K'taba d-'Eskolyon* as a Source for the Study of Early Mandaeism," 164.

Third, *HG* lists Anuš, son of Naṭar, who is probably the brother of Zazai.[35] He is also set on the Karun. Next, Anuš Šaiar, son of Nṣab, belongs on the Euphrates. He is unknown from other contexts. Brik Yawar, son of Bihdad—a man known to us—is placed at Pumbdit on the Euphrates (spelled *pum bit* in *HG*), which boasted a famous Jewish academy in ancient times and is near the town Fallujah today. Brik Yawar, listed in *CP* 170's roster of *ganzibra*s, is ubiquitous in colophons, but mostly in connection with his famous pupil Bayan Hibil. *HG* says that Pum bit was situated at the end (or: "head") of Sura. Sura was also the site of a Jewish school.

Next, Nṣab, son of Bihram, was assigned the mountains of Glazlak, which remain unknown.[36] Finally, Ska Manda stays at the waters near the mountain range of Parwan. Perhaps this is Kuh e-Parou (spelled Kuh e-Paran on some maps; "Kuh" means "mountain"), near Behistun, Iran. The possible meanings of Parou/Paran range from "oar" to "Pleiades" to "angel" or "fairy."[37] Near rivers, the mountain Parou is about latitude 45°15′ north, longitude 34°20′ east. Ska Manda's presence here would indeed put the Mandaeans in Media. In *CP*'s first colophon, Ska is spelled "Zka," a variant of Ska. The first element of the name is apparent in "Zka Yawar," too, and he is a priest listed very close to the time of Brik Yawar, son of Zka Manda, in that same colophon. The "Ska" name-element is present in Mandaean colophons mainly in the first Islamic century, for instance in the name of the copyist Ska Hiia, the very first copyist of *JB*.

Geographically—as far as the places are identifiable—we are in Mandaean "territory," so to speak. There is no need to dismiss *HG*'s information as sheer belated speculation. When Hibil Ziwa issued his decree to Anuš-ʿutra, the latter went to Tura d̲-Madai, the Median mountains. *HG* identifies Tura d̲-Madai with Haran Gawaita.[38] Here we may see the mythologized Haran/Hauran, for Media has plenty of rivers. Anuš-ʿutra brings Bhira, son of Šitil—"a descendant of Ardban king of the Naṣoraeans"—in order to install him in Baghdad. Bhira is unknown to me, but he may be a historical figure and he was perhaps summoned to replace Zazai as leader in Baghdad.

I do not see any of these men (except for Anuš-ʿutra, of course) as purely mythological figures. Despite his ascribed Light-world father, Zazai is a historical figure, and we know that several of the others are, too. Despite the impression given in *HG*, we do not have to assume that the seven leaders were installed at the same time, for men such as Zazai and Brik Yawar belong to different eras.[39] If Papa, son of Guda, is the same as Papa Anuš, we can place him in the very early Islamic period. There is a conspicuous clustering of copyists at this time, particularly well documented in *CP*'s first colophon.

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[35] See Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*, 52.

[36] *MD*, 93a, misspells the name as Glaznak.

[37] I gratefully owe this information to an Iranian native consultant, Mr. Masoud Fourouzandeh.

[38] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 10.

It seems undeniable that Mandaeans, early on, were spread around in western Iran to a much larger extent than they are today. To me, the Turkish city Haran as a Mandaean site is unconvincing. As regards Media, one may recall that Characene coins with Mandaic-type inscriptions dating as early as about 180 are found there. Such coins stem from Pušt e-Kuh, which is fairly close to the upper reaches of the river Karka (here called Abu Seimarre), and from Taq e-Bustan, situated very near Kuh e-Parou/Paran. This is only a short distance from the famous rock of Behistun; we are firmly on a major trade route here.[40]

In his usual combative style, Macuch argues for a first-century CE migration of the Mandaeans from West—which for Macuch always means "Palestine/Jordan"—to East, and for Mandaic as the prototype for the development of the Elymaic and Characenic scripts.[41] His discussion is focused on his disagreement with the scholars P. W. Coxon and J. Naveh, especially. Macuch effortlessly convinced W. Henning, who first dealt with the second- and third-century Tang e-Sarvak rock-inscriptions near Bebehan in the foothills of Luristan,[42] that Mandaic underlies the alphabets in these monuments. One of the inscriptions is from 215 CE, written by Ardban IV.[43] The scripts, Macuch says, are already 80 percent Mandaic, and the Mandaeans may already have had their own script with them when they migrated to southern Babylonia.[44] Macuch observes that in Parthian times, Mandaean orthography had not been fully developed, but in the third century, "the Naṣoraean literature with its fully established orthography already had passed its first flower."[45] Further, he points out the importance of

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[39] See, e.g., chap. 13 above.

[40] See M. P. Charlesworth, *Trade-Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire.*

[41] R. Macuch, "Origins."

[42] W. B. Henning, "The Monuments and Inscriptions of Tang e- Sarvak"; illustrations are added after the text.

[43] Macuch, "Origins," 176.

[44] Ibid., 190.

[45] Ibid., 182.

Mandaean colophons, assigns historical validity to Zazai, and is convinced that the Mandaean liturgies found their final redaction "a few centuries before the Islamic conquest."[46]

EDMONDO LUPIERI

Among many, Edmondo Lupieri has tried to delve into the questions of Mandaean history, including the issue of how reliable *HG* is as a historical source. But nowhere does he engage the debates involving Macuch and Rudolph. In terms of geography, Lupieri states that the mountains of Media lie "some hundreds of kilometers away [from Haran], toward the northeast."[47] In reality, the direction is more strictly due east, and the distance is, as Lupieri says, considerable. The core of Media is roughly around the old city of Ecbatana—and stretches between old Atropatene south of Lake Urmia to present-day Qum in the east and to old Elymais[48] in the south.

Staking out his theory of an eastern origin of the Mandaeans, Lupieri thinks that they belong to Media, and that their Jerusalem is "the Jerusalem of the East," or Babylon.[49] Their putative origin in Palestine carries no historical weight.[50] According to Lupieri, the Mandaeans were protected during the Hyspaosinid Dynasty in Characene (ca. 165 BCE – 222 CE). The Hyspaosinids were a minor Characenian dynasty, vassals to the Parthians until the time of Trajan (117 CE). Lupieri never discusses in which period of these centuries the Mandaeans may have dealt with any of the thirty-two dynastic rulers.

Lupieri supports himself with the Hyspaosine divine patron Bihram-Verethragna-Heracles.[51] So, for Lupieri, the presence of Bihram in Mandaean texts is explicable on that basis. Mandaean baptism, called "the baptism of Bihram the Great," becomes a major point in Lupieri's argument. Lupieri finds it significant that Mandaeans did not name their main ritual after John the Baptist, but after Bihram. If the Characene Hyspaosinids are involved with the Mandaeans, it would have been toward the very end of their rule, in view of the Artaban question.[52] But this would put us in the beginning of the third century, and therefore it does not fit with my arguments so far.

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[46] Ibid., 185.

[47] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 139.

[48] Kahrstedt, *Artabanos III*, is fond of referring to Elymais as a "robber state," at least in its early manifestation.

[49] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 157.

[50] Regarding the Mandaean emigration legend, Lupieri (ibid., 161) considers the Mandaeans to have taken over the story of the Christians' flight from Jerusalem to Pella in Transjordan.

[51] Ibid., 163.

Regarding Lupieri's argument about Bihram, one must remember that he remains a minor Lightworld figure in Mandaeism. John the Baptist, whom Lupieri sees as an original feature in the religion, was never its founder, but its renewer and central prophet. Lupieri also argues that the Mandaeans emphasized John more strongly after the encounter with Islam, when indeed John becomes a counterfigure to Mohammed.[53] This seems eminently credible. But when Lupieri notes that John is never called on in prayers, not portrayed as an intermediary, and not expected to return as a messiah,[54] I must conclude that Luperi operates with unclear categories. The salient point is that John is always a human being and therefore would never inhabit the potential roles mentioned by Lupieri. Especially in the face of Islam, it becomes paramount for the Mandaeans to emphasize John as human, not divine, for the Muslims themselves recognize John as a legitimate pre-Islamic prophet.

In another context, when Lupieri says that the Mandaeans tend to divinize Zazai, he is going too far, for Zazai is certainly never anything but human.[55] Perhaps Zazai's occasionally ascribed Lightworld fathers are the reason for this idea, but such ascriptions are not to be taken literally. They belong in the "heavenly book" traditions. Lupieri sees Zazai as a demoted "inspired scribe" condemned to oblivion.[56] But Zazai certainly lives on in the colophons!

Zazai may be the founder of Mandaeism,[57] Lupieri ventures, though this hardly fits with Zazai's time period, which is the last quarter of the third century. And Lupieri sets the origin of Mandaeism around the second century, which indeed becomes problematic. The Hyspaosinids' rule came to an end in the year 222,[58] some fifty years before we have a date for Zazai. Nowhere does Lupieri indicate that he puts any stake on Zazai's date, which we *do* have from Ramuia's testimony, and which Macuch, especially, takes absolutely seriously.

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[52] For the Hyspaosinids, see Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, 206, and see Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia*, 314–15.

[53] For details of my view of Lupieri's book, see my review of *The Mandaeans: The Last Gnostics*.

[54] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 162.

[55] Ibid., 169.

[56] Ibid., 172.

[57] Ibid.

[58] See Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia*, 315.

In a letter to Drower of September 27, 1964, Macuch makes a comment on Zazai when he mentions the Mandaic lead rolls in his possession. Macuch dates them prior to the end of the Sasanid era, making them pre-Islamic. But he adds that the scholar Franz Altheim thinks they are much older, and Macuch himself concludes that on the basis of the rolls' orthographic evidence "they must have preceded the canonization of the Mand. orthography which was probably made by Zazai d̲-Gawazta in the third century."

HG presents us with a piece of information vital for the task of dating a scribe prior to Ramuia. Just as Ṭib was known as "Ramuia's city," it was earlier dubbed "Šganda's city." Even as late as the thirteenth century, the town was known as the residence of Ṣabeans (i.e., Mandaeans), who revered Seth, son of Adam. Seth had, according to tradition, lived in Ṭib. The Ṣabeans in Ṭib became Muslims after Islam's emergence, says the source, the geographer Yaqut (ca. 1223).[59] But how they could still be Mandaeans *and* have converted to Islam is not explained.[60]

Lupieri mentions the heresy of Qiqel,[61] instigated by Ruha,[62] which occurred in 554 and marks a return to Jewish values. This is the time of one of the early scribes in Mandaeism, Šganda, son of Yasmin.[63] I will return to Qiqel later, but for now, it may be pertinent to say a few words about what one might call "other Mandaean heresies." Acording to Dirk Kruisheer, Theodor bar Koni's three listed heresies—Kantaeans, Dosithaeans, and Nerigaeans—can all be related to the Mandaeans. Kruisheer (with S. Gerö)[64] notes that no persons or events with respect to those heresies can be dated to the time after the fifth century (we recall that bar Koni himself lived at the very end of the 8th c.).

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[59] See Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 4, with reference to the geographical work of Yaqut Shihab ad-Din, *Muʿjam al-Buldan* (Geographical Dictionary), 6:76. This raises the old issue: the need for a scholarly investigation of Mandaeism's relationship to the so-called Sethian Gnostics. See Drower, *MII*, 384.

[60] For the legal status of the Mandaeans in the tenth and early fourteenth centuries, see in my introduction above, "A Few Testimonies."

[61] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 158. Compare the much more positive legend about Qiqel in Drower, *MII*, 273–80.

[62] See Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 12–13.

[63] See Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 164–65.

[64] Kruisheer, "Theodore bar Koni's *K'taba d'Eskolyon*," 151, with n. 2; Stephen Gerö, "Ophite Gnosticism"; Robert Hespel and René Draguet,

Another source in Kruisheer's analysis is the late-twelfth-century Jacobite patriarch Michael the Syrian. He says that it was in the 480s that the two first-mentioned sects appeared in Persia.[65] These have undeniable "Mandaean" traits, and the two alleged Mandaean leaders were Battai and Ado. Much detail on these figures and their teachings ensues in bar Koni, whose *Memra* 11 (the primary source) gives us a glimpse of what Kruisheer calls "Syro-Mesopotamean Gnosticism."[66]

But when Kruisheer states that this source may be usable in accounting for the beginnings of Mandaeism,[67] he is in error. This has nothing to do with the beginnings of Mandaeism, but deals with a time of heresies *within* Mandaeism. The sects that bar Koni describes are just that. Around the early eighth century, we find Mandaean scribal activities centered in Ṭib, with Haiuna and other Mandaean luminaries. This is a flourishing age for Mandaeism, when the heresies of the fifth century (and one particular one of the 6th, as we shall see) seem to have been defeated, and the Mandaean religion appears to be firmly consolidated.

As *HG* cryptically hints, both Judaism and Christianity had formed part of the Mandaean world from the very start. The undeniable elements of Mandaeism's "others," its enemies in the religion's innermost "self," must be accounted for, somehow. But how, and where? I now turn to an overlooked scholarly source in this respect.

A CHRISTIAN CONNECTION

In his 1940 Danish doctoral dissertation, which has received very little attention, Viggo Schou-Pedersen makes the argument that Mandaeism was, for a brief period, a Christian phenomenon. Therefore, he proposes, most (but not all) Christian materials in Mandaeism form part of Mandaeism's most ancient traditions, its earliest history. As Mandaeans made use of Christian legends and texts, John the Baptist was, so to speak, "imported" from Christianity. The story of his miraculous birth begins in *JB* 18, continues in 32, and shows no hostility toward Christianity. That the Mandaeans knew a variety of Christian texts (both those later called "canonical" and those not included in that category) had been accepted for decades, before Schou-Pedersen.[68]

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[65] Kruisheer, "Theodore bar Koni's *K'taba d'Eskolyon*," 153.

[66] Ibid., 161.

[67] Ibid., 162. Note 22 goes against Rudolph here, but Rudolph is the more correct of the two.

Indeed, there are curious overlaps between *HG*'s story of John the Baptist, hunted by Herod, being sheltered on a white mountain and fed, first by fruits from a tree, and then by a named lilith,[69] and the apocryphal "Gospel of James" ("Protevangelium Jacobi"), dated after 150. In the latter, John's mother Elizabeth, with her babe in arms, is protected by a magical mountain. "And that mountain made a light to gleam for her."[70] The connections between Mandaean and apocryphal Christian traditions need a thorough examination.

In *GR* 1 and *JB* 76, Schou-Pedersen notes, Anuš-ʿutra replaces Jesus; and in the latter text, Anuš performs miracles in Jerusalem, deeds that Christianity of course assigns to Jesus. One ought to note that John does not take this role. In part, it seems, Mandaeism may wish to keep John away from a miracle-worker role, for that activity belongs to *ʿutra*s, not to human prophets. As far as Schou-Pedersen's thesis is concerned, John is not adopted into Mandaeism early on for the purpose of fueling the fire of anti-Christian feelings. Only later Mandaean texts seem to be interested in mocking Christianity, especially Byzantine Christianity. In my view, in the rare cases when John *does* perform miracles, we may be seeing an alternative tradition, one that pits John directly against Jesus.

Mandaeans may very well have been part of the multi-Christian picture as John-adherents and therefore naturally opposed to Jewish Christianity's negative view of John. To Jewish Christianity, John is the "false," first, prophet, paving the way for the "true" one, Jesus. But those loyal to John—Mandaeans (and others?)— might be hostile to both Peter and Paul, and in Jewish Christianity we find the prime hero to be Peter. That John precedes Jesus as prophet is well known from the New Testament gospels, and it is also a Jewish Christian theological point. Lupieri notes the sequence "John first, Jesus second," but he does not put it into the context of Jewish Christianity.[71] In terms of Schou-Pedersen's theories, one might say that if the Mandaeans were Christians early on, they would certainly have been part of an internal Christian debate.

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[68] I refer the reader to my *Mandaeans*, chap. 5, on Miriai. Consult also my "Re-Investigation of *The Book of John*."

[69] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 6.

[70] Edgar Hennecke, "The Protevangelium of James," 387.

[71] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 154. "Jewish Christianity" is a common term for an early type of non-Gentile, non-Pauline Christianity.

It is possible that, at some crucial point in the "field of competition" between John and Jesus and their respective disciples, the Mandaeans decided to emphasize John over against Jesus. Let me stress that I am not, so far, making any claims about a direct historical connection between John the Baptist and the Mandaeans (which *may* nevertheless have been the case).[72] I am, however, suggesting that Schou-Pedersen's analysis of the Mandaean texts and the religion's possible original "home" is a thesis that should be taken seriously. This is especially intriguing in view of Lupieri's work.

There is no mention of Schou-Pedersen in Lupieri's book, and yet the two scholars share remarkably similar ideas. Of course Lupieri has a tremendous advantage, given the intervening decades of Mandaean research since 1940. Lupieri wonders why the Mandaeans have no independent John traditions,[73] to which Schou-Pedersen would have replied: Because these traditions are Christian, as were the Mandaeans themselves, early on.

Similar to Lupieri, Schou-Pedersen holds that the Mandaean presence in the East (Babylonia) is natural because they are there as heretical Christians, "representing the extreme limit of Jewish Christianity,"[74] without historical connections to any Palestinian Jerusalem. Like Lupieri after him, Schou-Pedersen thinks that John belongs to the earliest Mandaean traditions.[75] But Lupieri sees the Mandaeans not as heretical Christians, but rather as a syncretistic Jewish and Christian product (though apparently not *Jewish Christian*, in the more technical scholarly sense, as Schou-Pedersen maintains). Both scholars write off any Mandaean connection to the "real" Jerusalem.

Lidzbarski, on the other hand, considers Mandaeism as having developed in heterodox Jewish circles in the West (i.e., Jordan/Palestine), although he admits that Mandaeism could be traced to Babylonian Judaism. For some unexplained reason, he holds that heterodox Judaism could only have risen in "the West."[76] But one may well ask why Jewish heterodoxies would be more apt to emerge in the West than in Babylonia.

In the first century CE, Babylonia was certainly a multi-cultural and religious milieu, as we have seen in the descriptions by Wiesehöfer and Kahrstedt. The region houses a variety of ethnic groups and religions. If

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[72] See my "Turning the Tables on Jesus: The Mandaean View."

[73] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 126.

[74] Schou-Pedersen, *Bidrag*, 224.

[75] Ibid., 165.

[76] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, xvii.

John the Baptist was known in Babylonia, even as early as the late 30s CE, we must ask whether the Mandaeans are the ones who had brought the John traditions eastward. Considering the Wadi Hauran thesis again, it may be possible to argue that the Mandaeans had a historical connection to John even before they migrated to Babylonia. Might the Mandaeans have hurried from Palestine and arrived early enough in Babylonia to be helped by Ardban II further westward in a second stage of migration?

Several scholars imagine a two-part Mandaean exodus, but the theory has usually involved the city of Haran (in southern Turkey) as the Mandaeans' first halting-place. From there, they followed the rivers south and then branched out to Media. With J. B. Segal, I hold Haran to be an unlikely first goal, so I suggest instead Wadi Hauran as an initial route. If the Mandaeans went that way, were they already John adherents? It is difficult to answer this question, but the idea is not entirely impossible.

Considering the views of Hermann Lichtenberger—who never mentions the Mandaeans in his study on baptist groups[77]—one may note several significant points. Lichtenberger argues that to John's adherents, the Baptist is a prophet in the Hebrew biblical tradition, and he is already elevated as a messiah figure among his disciples.[78] Mandaeans would not agree with any of this: they see John the Baptist as a renewer and reformer within their own, already existing, religion. Lichtenberger proceeds by saying that Jesus took over some of John's adherents and was baptized by John (i.e., became his disciple), and that John's group did not disintegrate until the end of the first century.[79] I suggest that the Mandaean views of Jesus as an apostate Mandaean can be explained as a mythologized elaboration with a historical core.

Lichtenberger draws attention to the various John-traditions in areas such as Rome, Ephesus, Asia Minor, and Syria. The internal Christian discussions about John's status take place in the diaspora, and the quarrel concentrates on water versus spirit baptism.[80] Mandaeans may well have been part of this discussion, whether in Babylonia or not. John emphasized repentance, purity, and preparation for the end of the world. None of these themes formed part of the Jewish proselytism baptism, according to

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[77] Hermann Lichtenberger, "Täufergemeinden und frühchristliche Täuferproblematik im letzten Drittel des 1. Jahrhunderts."

[78] Ibid., 44–45.

[79] Ibid., 48, 55 n. 81.

[80] Ibid., 47, 48, 56.

Lichtenberger.[81] In short, John does not easily fit into any known Jewish religious framework.

The *JB* traditions, including the John stories in *JB* (and in other parts of the Mandaean literary corpus), have often been dismissed as being too late to be of real interest historically and of much less value than the *Ginza*, for instance. Macuch, in his letter to Drower of September 27, 1964, says, "Poor Lidzbarski made a mistake that he started his work on Mandaic with the Johannesbuch which is one of the latest documents of Mand. literature." But these traditions may indeed contain early materials, as Schou-Pedersen argues, and one must remember that of the seven *Ginza* colophons, only one, at the end of *GL*, goes back to pre-Islamic times. Yet, the *Ginza* contains much ancient material. The same argument could be made for *JB*, but this idea has seldom been advanced, because scholars habitually state that *JB* is too young to be of real interest. Schou-Pedersen—it should be noted—reminds us that it is always important to separate the two steps: ancient Mandaean material and later editions of it.

A JEWISH CHRISTIAN POSSIBILITY

One might be able to trace another track in the argument for Christianity as part of the development of Mandaeism. In 1966, Shlomo Pines published a study of a tenth-century Arabic text by the Muʿtazilite theologian ʿAbd al-Jabbar, "The Establishment of Proofs for the Prophethood of Our Master Mohammed."[82] Purportedly Islamic, the text contains heavy doses of Jewish Christian interpolations, showing traditions that bear on first-century Christian history. The document may have been written down in the fifth century, according to Pines,[83] possibly stemming from the city of Haran.[84]

This document (which is in Istanbul) indirectly supports the view that when the Christian authority John Chrysostom was fulminating against Judaizing Christians in the late fourth century in Antioch, he was addressing a real threat against the budding orthodoxy. Pines notes that there is no scholarly account of why such Judaizers would be operating and constituting an actual threat so late.[85]

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[81] Ibid., 56 with n. 83.

[82] Shlomo Pines, *The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source*.

[83] Ibid., 21.

[84] Ibid., 35.

[85] Ibid., 35 n. 131.

He suggests that Upper Mesopotamia (i.e., Jezira) and Mosul may have been the sites of the first-century Christians who fled Jerusalem.[86] With this statement, we enter the question of the Mandaean emigration legend (which Pines does not consider). As mentioned earlier in this chapter (n. 51), Lupieri notes that the Mandaeans may have known of the story of the early Jerusalem Christians fleeing to Pella in the aftermath of the 66–70 CE revolt. He sees this as an example of a common type: a religion's founding story.[87] It is irrelevant, for the present purposes, that the Pella story is discredited in modern scholarship as historically uncertain. The point is that there *were* such stories, and that the Mandaeans, if they had ties to Jewish Christianity, might detect a fit with the Mandaeans' own story of their origins. In this context, I would still keep open the Wadi Hauran possibility.

Pines thinks that Jewish Christianity—with its hatred of Paul, its loyalty to Jewish law and rituals, its opposition to mingling with Gentiles, and its low Christology—survived in relative obscurity in Mesopotamia for centuries. Realizing, in the seventh century, that they had ideas in common with Islam, the Jewish Christians immediately took advantage of the situation and dared to become more overt.[88] So Jewish Christian materials, such as the interpolations into ʿAbd al-Jabbar's text, may have been translated into Arabic in order to further Muslim acceptance.[89]

Referring to the peculiar feature that ʿAbd al-Jabbar calls Pilate "king," while Herod is viewed as his companion, Pines draws attention to *GR* 29.8, in which Pilate is identified as "*Paltus malka ḏ-alma*" ("Pilate, king of the world").[90] Another odd identification found in Mandaeism is the compound "*Mšiha Paulis*." In *JB* 31, this expression is used no fewer than five times in the formula where Ruha, during John's baptism of Jesus, turns the tables and changes the Mandaean rituals into Christian ones.[91] Lidzbarski translated '*Mšiha Paulis*" as "Christus-Paulis." Mandaeism tends to use "the anointed one," *Mšiha*, for Jesus, but translations (Lidzbarski's and those of others) unavoidably evoke Christological terms. The equation of the Messiah with Paul in *JB* hints at Jewish Christian opposition to Gentile Christianity, and it may also be a sign that this particular Mandaean tradition associates Christianity with *Byzantine* Christianity.

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[86] Ibid., 37 n. 138.

[87] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 161.

[88] Pines, *Jewish Christians*, 40.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid., 53, 58, with n. 232. *GR* 1.1, p. 30, and also *GR* 2.1, p. 48 §5 (Pines does not give the second *Ginza* reference).

[91] Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*, 108.

The Mandaean polemical traditions against Judaism and Christianity (and other religions) have not been sufficiently studied,[92] but one may take note of a few points. First, it is striking that in texts such as *GR* 2.1, we find the accusation that the Jews do not agree among themselves; they "do not stand in one word" is the recurrent expression. Moreover, the Jews have distorted, abandoned, and forgotten their own traditions, their law, and the works of Abraham.[93] It is not, of course, that the Mandaeans approve of Adonai, Moses, Abraham, and Adonai's female counterpart Ruha; far from it. But the thrust of the polemics is: abandonment of traditions. This would be parallel to the Jewish Christian argument against Gentile Christianity, as noted by Pines. Recall that the texts *GR* 1 and 2 are covered by the colophon ending with Ram Šilai, in the very earliest Islamic times, the era when the Jewish Christians defeated by Byzantine Christian orthodoxy are approaching Muslims with renewed hopes, according to Pines.

The Jewish Christians opposed consorting with Gentiles, while the Mandaeans, for their part, warn: Do not mix with the Jews! For both, ethnic purity is essential. Among other texts, *GR* 1 and 2.1 attest to this. In *GR* 2.1, we find "*Mšiha rumaia*."[94] Rumaia can mean "Roman," that is, Byzantine, but also "deceiver," even "paralysis" or "pain."[95] Multiple meanings may well be intended in *GR* 2.1, for Mandaean literature abounds in puns and wordplays. Again, it is well to recall Schou-Pedersen's argument: that the anti-Christianity in Mandaeism is to be put to a later, Byzantine stage of the religion. Only then does Christianity become an enemy, not earlier.

So, if Mandaeism rejects both Byzantine Christianity and Judaism, different reasons account for the dismissal. One might imagine Mandaeans and Jewish Christians in a conversation, both arguing against Roman, pro-Pauline, pro-Gentile Christianity. But another argument would have preceded it: the status of Jesus himself. After a brief, positive consideration of Christianity—probably of the Jewish Christian kind—Mandaeism staked itself on John, not Jesus (cf. Schou-Pedersen's hypothesis). From the Jewish Christian view, this would have placed the Mandaeans in one particular enemy category. For the "false prophet" (John) precedes the "true one" (Jesus) according to these Christians, who may have nodded sagely at seeing their theology proven by the Mandaean obstinacy. Mandaeans would have agreed to the sequence of the two prophets, but not to their status. While Mandaeans strongly rejected Judaism, the Jewish Christians deplored the break with it, as proved by the victory of Paul-centrism.

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[92] But see my *Mandaeans*, chaps. 5 and 13, and Shapira, "Manichaeans (*Marmanaiia*)."

[93] *GR* 2.1, p. 43 §105.

[94] Ibid, p. 49 §140.

[95] See *MD*, 430a–b, 435b.

Still, that the Mandaeans were tempted by Jewish traditions is demonstrated in the Qiqel episode. As we have seen—in the section on Lupieri above—this Mandaean regression to Jewish values occurred in the mid-sixth century. *HG* says that the Mandaean leader Qiqel was led astray by Ruha, who had disguised herself as Hibil Ziwa. Adonai of course lurked behind this scheme, because he wanted the Mandaeans to return to him. Under Ruha's influence, Qiqel rewrote the Mandaean texts in accordance with Ruha's directions, but when he discovered that he had been misled, he demanded that all of his texts be gathered and burned. However, some of the writings remained.[96]

Like other materials in *HG*, this story has a historical core. The Quqite heresy arose in Edessa, Syria, in the second century, and it is named for the founder Quq, which means "pitcher" or "jug." The Quqites stressed the Hebrew Bible, made changes in the New Testament, associated twelve prophets with twelve apostles, and held that the latter corresponded to the same number of gospels. The Jewish Christian group called the Ebionites used a Gospel of the Twelve, which is considered Quqite, and Marcion may have had some dealings with the Quqites. As late as 410, the Armenian bishop Marutha of Maipherkat included the Quqites in his catalogue of heresies, a document he used as ammunition at the synod in Seleukia-Ktesiphon in that year. Marutha names several characteristics of the Quqites, none of them reflecting particularly Mandaean ideas. A sixth-century presbyter of Nisibis (Syria), Barhad Bešabba, also testifies to the Quqites, who, he says, mixed Chaldean wisdom with the Bible.[97]

The latter testimony fits with the sixth-century back-to-Judaism upheaval in Mandaeism, as we see it in *HG*. Qiqel is here made into a wayward Mandaean, but the connections to a Judaizing form of Christianity are clear enough. To my knowledge, no scholar has linked the Mandaean Qiqel story with the Jewish Christian heresy arising in Syria in the second century. A non-Christian reflection of the Quqite tradition is indeed to be found in the Mandaean history as presented by *HG*.

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[96] Drower, *Haran Gawaita*, 12–14.

[97] For some of this, see Edgar Hennecke, "Gospels Attributed to the Twelve as a Group," 264–65. I have also relied on my class notes, "Ancient Syrian Christianity," taught by Arthur Vööbus at The University of Chicago Divinity School, winter 1976.

Despite Mandaeism's anti-Jewish rantings, the Jews cannot have been much of a threat to the Mandaeans as Islam arose. Rather, the Mandaeans early on adopted—and adapted for their own purposes—some of the Jewish Christian arguments against the errors of Judaism and of Pauline Christianity. Though they were far from joining the Jewish Christians, the Mandaeans nevertheless kept elements of the Jewish Christian stance.[98] In terms of the Mandaean heresies of Battai and Ado, according to bar Koni they belonged to an earlier stage than the Quqites. That there were still unexpurgated writings after the Quqite heresy in the Mandaean tradition (as *HG* says) makes one wonder about the character and endurance of this literature.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

I suggest that the Mandaeans may have played a small, perhaps involuntary, part in the uprisings in Babylonia in the late 30s, and that Ardban supported them and helped them go to Media. The Mandaeans understood themselves—and were seen by others—as Jews until then. They abandoned Judaism (the Sign of the Seven) as a result of the Babylonian disruptions. If they had not done so already, they soon broke away from Christianity, to which they were only attached very briefly, as Schou-Pedersen argues. Gnostic ideas and Christian influences may already have been present in Babylonia. Or, if Gnosticism was not yet in evidence, the Mandaeans may have developed it, in the east. It is possible that the Mandaeans constructed their literary traditions fully *after* their arrival in Media.

Further, Mandaeans either took over the Christian legend of the flight from Palestine/Jordan to the East, or, they themselves had very recently come via the Wadi Hauran route. The Pella legend is suspiciously late. If the Mandaeans had historical connections directly with John the Baptist, they may have fled very soon after his death. In any case, the Mandaeans show no interest in the story of John's death as told by the New Testament gospels or by Josephus. Between about 30 and Ardban's helping hand in the late 30s, much could have happened. Neither Nabataea nor Mesopotamia was under Roman rule at this time. As noted, "Inner Haran/Hauran" is a mythologized concept, like "Inner Jordan." Both of these are rivers, carriers and manifestations of the Lightworld. But Wadi Hauran is an earthly geographical place.

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[98] For more details, consult Schou-Pedersen, most of whose arguments tend toward a different direction from mine.

It is possible that the whole scholarly quest for "Gnostic origins" needs to take the Mandaeans into account again, but for new and more complex reasons than before. The Mandaeans may be among the first attested Gnostics. Like Simon Magus, the Mandaeans provide evidence for mid-first-century Gnostics. With respect to Valentinianism, a later phenomenon, it is useful to recall Säve-Söderbergh's findings: the Mandaean expression "I am a Great Mana" was taken over by the Valentinians as their death sacrament formula: "*skeuos eimi entimon.*" The likewise formulaic "I am a Mana of the Great Life" (found in *GL* 2.18 and elsewhere) has a parallel in the Manichaean *Psalm of Thomas* 5.[99] Säve-Söderbergh has amassed evidence for the extensive Manichaean borrowings of Mandaean literature, especially for the composition of the "Psalms of Thomas," which fit very closely with the Mandaean death mass liturgies.[100]

The Mandaeans adhered to a cultic societal arrangement reminiscent of Philo's Dead Sea–area Therapeutae, as *JB*'s story about Miriai reflects.[101] According to this tradition, the congregation chanted, first with men and women in separate groups, and then in unison. One may also recall the antiphonal Mandaean liturgies, particularly the prayers known as *ʿniana*s, "responses." If Philo's first-century testimony can be linked to the contemporaneous Mandaean social and liturgical arrangement—both being evidence of Jewish sectarian customs—we have some intriguing parallels. Did the Mandaeans already have antiphonal chanting—with genders separated, then in unison—in the Palestinian area, before they went eastward?

Šlama, around 200, and Zazai, in the 270s, among the earliest Mandaean copyist luminaries, may be evidence for a religion that found its firm systematization in Media. The interpretations of the coin and rock inscriptions are important in this respect. Above all, in terms of multicultural influences, the Mandaeans lived right on the trade routes. If their texts had been written in, say, six different languages, we might have been less apt to "provincialize" them. But the linguistic boundary, Mandaic, is no indication of a mental one.

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[99] See Säve-Söderbergh, *Studies*, 129.

[100] Ibid., 160.

[101] See again my *Mandaeans*, chap. 5, and consult C. D. Yonge, *The Works of Philo*, 11.83–84, "The Contemplative Life," pp. 705–6.

The early locales in Media associated with the Mandaeans are on the trade routes, tied to the Silk Road. This obvious point has *never* been used in the debate about Mandaean early history, but it is important. The wealth of Mandaean literary traditions may have developed in Media, where Zoroastrian materials were strong, Jewish traditions would certainly be present from the western side, and pagan influences pervasive. The Mandaeans seem to have developed their literature by making use of all of these materials, plus Christianity. If they did this after arriving in Media, had they, at first, been disaffected Jewish sectarians, followers of John the Baptist in Palestine?

Unavoidably, many of the connections I raise here create more questions that I can answer at present. But the discussion of "Gnostic origins" needs to take a new turn and to include geographic areas much farther east than it has done in recent decades. I am not arguing for a reawakening of the long-discredited theories of Richard Reitzenstein and Rudolf Bultmann, but we do need to look at early Mandaeism (and early Gnosticism) in a new light. It is not a matter of the old "Iranian mystery of salvation" (Reitzenstein) or "pre-Christian 'Gnostic Redeemer' myth" (Bultmann), but rather a suggestion that we view the Mandaeans as the earliest example of a wide-ranging group—possibly moving from Palestine to Media—creating our first evidence for Gnostic religiosity.

AFTERWORD

MEMORY

In *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran*, Drower describes the rituals of eating for the dead.[1] Elsewhere in the book, she notes that on the outskirts of Mandaean towns and villages, the mounds where deceased Mandaeans are buried quickly become indistinguishable in the areas chosen for the graves.[2] During the time of her fieldwork, she says, the custom of having gravestones bearing the names of the dead began to become prevalent, but older, pious Mandaeans frowned on the novelty. Traditionally, there were no grave-markers. In 1996, I was in the Mandaean graveyard in Ahwaz, Iran, and there were rows of stone slabs with the chiseled names of the dead.[3]

If there are no graves, how are the dead remembered? It is possible to see both the long name lists in colophons and in the common copyist formula—to the effect that a text is copied "so that there may be a commemoration for me on earth [i.e., Tibil] and in the above worlds of Light"—as a form of tomb substitution. Names endure in the memory of the living, and, in written form, in the Mandaean colophons. In a real sense, they constitute immense repositories of the dead. Those residing in the Light-world are still connected to the living on earth. As long as scribes faithfully list their clients' names and those of the long skeins of priestly lineages before them, the dead still "live."

The annual public recitation of *CP* 170, with its names of Mandaeans in recent memory and luminaries of the past, keeps up a *laufa*.[4] So too, in a silent and more extensive way, do the names in the colophons. The fabric of the names constitutes nothing less than Mandaean history. Recurrent luminaries of the past—the most famous scribes and religious leaders—are of course remembered more often than others. It may seem trite to recall that the very verb "to remember" implies reconstituted membership, but it makes very literal sense in the case of Mandaeism. In the unbroken links between the living and the dead, one may see the scribal lists as a reconstituting of the *laufa*, and a negation of any severance between past and present, dead and living.

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[1] Drower, *MII*, 187–96.

[2] Ibid., 184.

[3] A few years later, on the pretext of making space for a park, the local authorities razed part of the cemetery.

[4] See my *Mandaeans*, chap. 8.

Indeed, the sheer act of writing scribal lists in Mandaean colophons can be understood as a religious duty. Thus we see the crime of cut-off colophons in a new way. Colophon-writing could be added to the roster of Mandaean rituals, although such activity has not been recognized as a ritual. Every time a name is written and rewritten, that person is conjured up again, whether the name is recorded silently or muttered. A priest copying a number of texts secures the memory of his own name, too, for his memory is quite literally broadcast in the texts. And so are all the other names in any given colophon's lineages. To promulgate and recreate Mandaean texts means to secure them, but also to secure the names in the colophons. As long as the texts are kept alive, so are the people, past and present.

One may discern a pattern of three concentric circles regarding the commemoration of the departed. First, there are the death rituals after each individual death.[5] At Panja, once a year, all of the Mandaeans who have died during the past year are remembered by means of the *Ṭabahata* masiqta. The large commemoration prayer *CP* 170 is recited.[6] Finally, I would argue that the very name lists in the colophons constitute yet another round of remembrance, forming a continuous chain of names to the time when the religion began to formulate its texts and to record its scribes. Even though the complete number of Mandaeans' names throughout history, of course, cannot be retrieved, the genealogies in the colophons are impressive in their far-reaching scope. Only the Mormons, in their salvation efforts to collect all names in human history, may be somewhat comparable to the Mandaeans in this respect. But while the Mormons engage themselves in a universal task, the Mandaeans concentrate on their own members.

Many more Mandaean documents than those I have mentioned could be marshaled in order to fill out the discernible "skeleton" of names in my colophon research so far. In my view, no "history of the Mandaeans," in whatever manner such a task might be envisioned and construed, can afford to ignore the colophon sources. Macuch had planned to write an article "Aus den mandäischen Kolophonen" for an envisioned third volume of *Die Araber in der alten Welt*,[7] but unfortunately, Macuch's untimely death prevented the article from seeing the light of day. My contribution here marks only a beginning in Mandaean colophon studies.

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[5] See chap. 10 above, on *CP* 170.

[6] For details, see especially Drower, *MII*, chaps. 11–12, and also my *Mandaeans*, chap. 8.

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[7] Macuch, "Anfänge der Mandäer," 190 n. 26.

PLATES

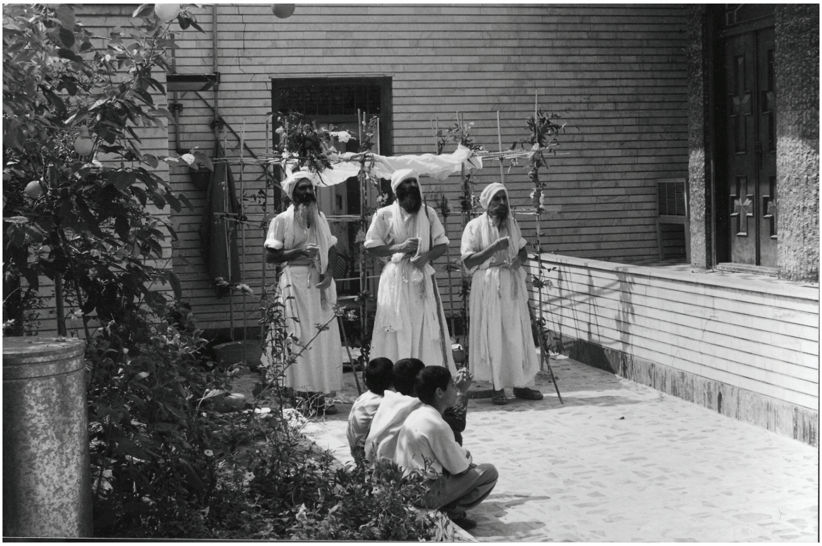


Plate 1. Three priests, Sheikh Salah, Sheikh Najah, and Sheikh Duragi, tying their belts outside a wedding canopy. Ahwaz, Iran, April 1996. Photo by author.

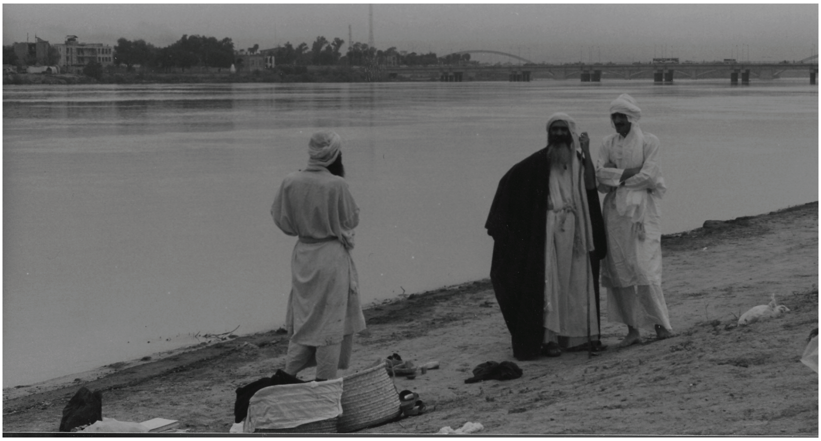


Plate 2. Two priests, Sheikh Najah *(back to camera)* and Sheikh Salah, and the bridegroom, Behzad, on the bank of the river Karun. Ahwaz, Iran, April 1996. Photo by author.

Plate 3. Two Mandaean sisters, Shafia Abbas Amara and Lamea Abbas Amara. San Diego, California, spring 1994. Photo by Jesse Buckley.

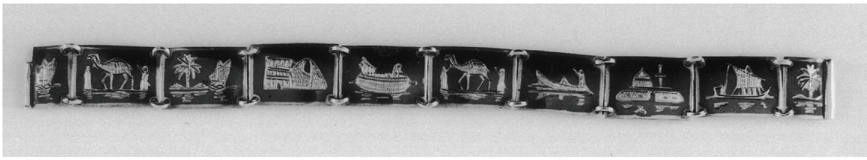


Plate 4. A traditional Mandaean bracelet. Photo by Jesse Buckley.

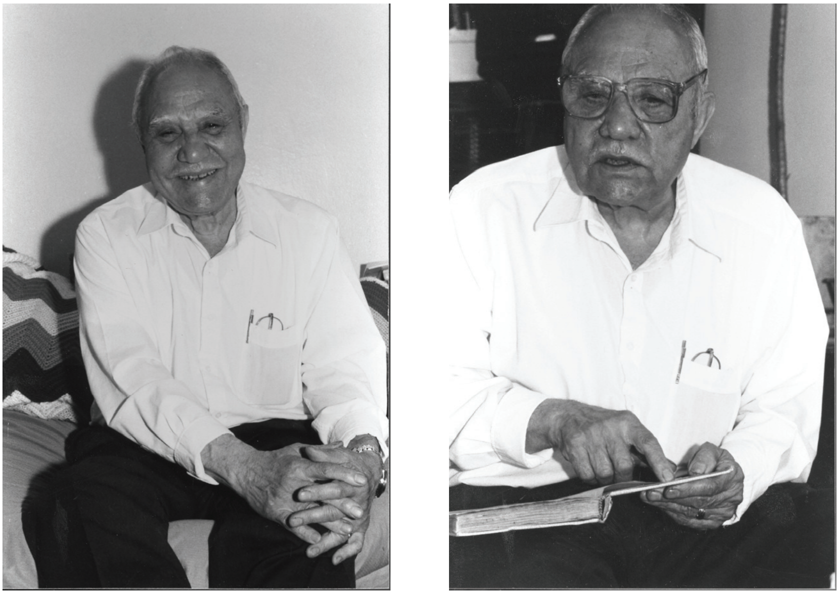


Plate 5. Two portraits of Mr. Nasser Sobbi. Flushing, New York, 1993.
Photos by Jesse Buckley.

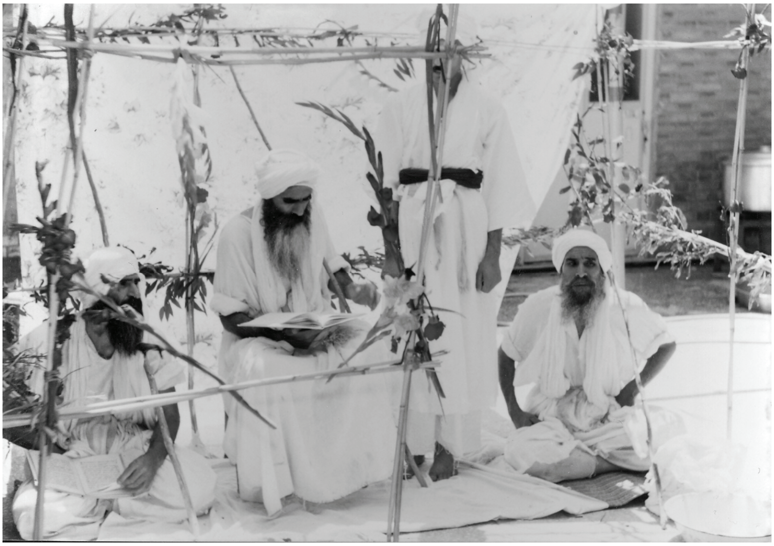


Plate. 6. The same three priests as in Plate 1, but inside the wedding canopy.
Ahwaz, Iran, ca. 1996. Photographer unknown.

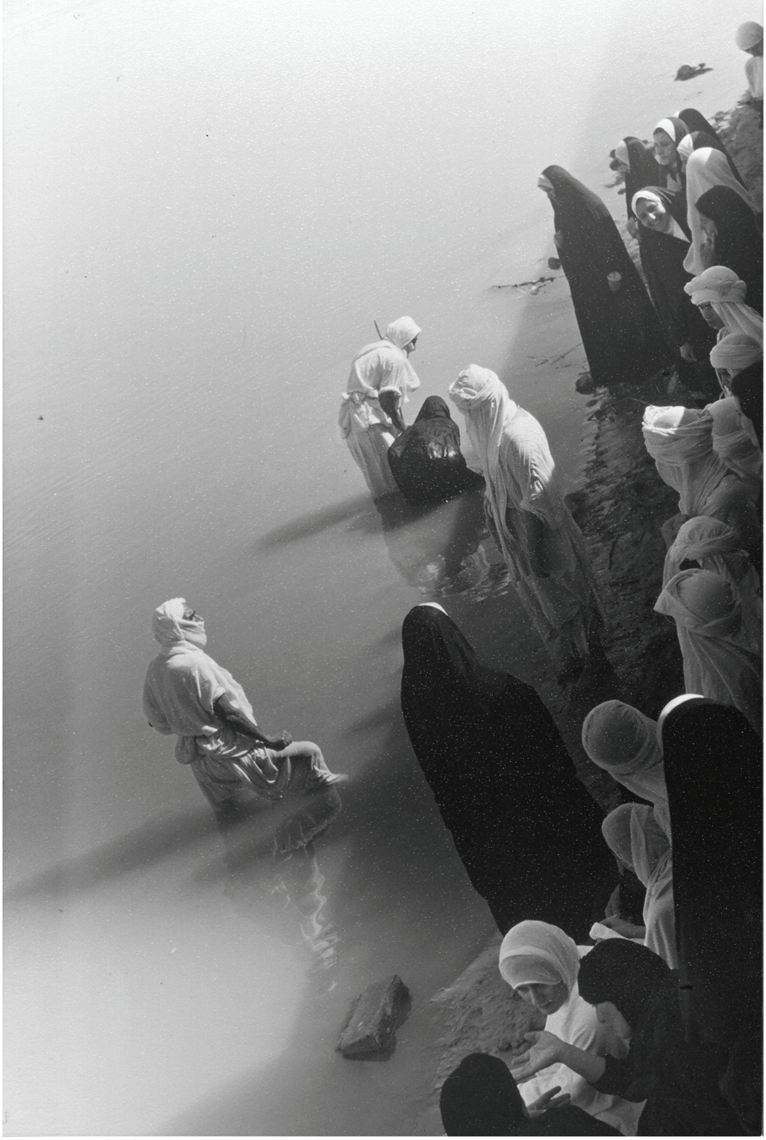


Plate 7. Baptism scene in the Karun River. Ahwaz, Iran.
Photo courtesy of the Jerzy Grotowski Center, Wroclaw, Poland, 2001.

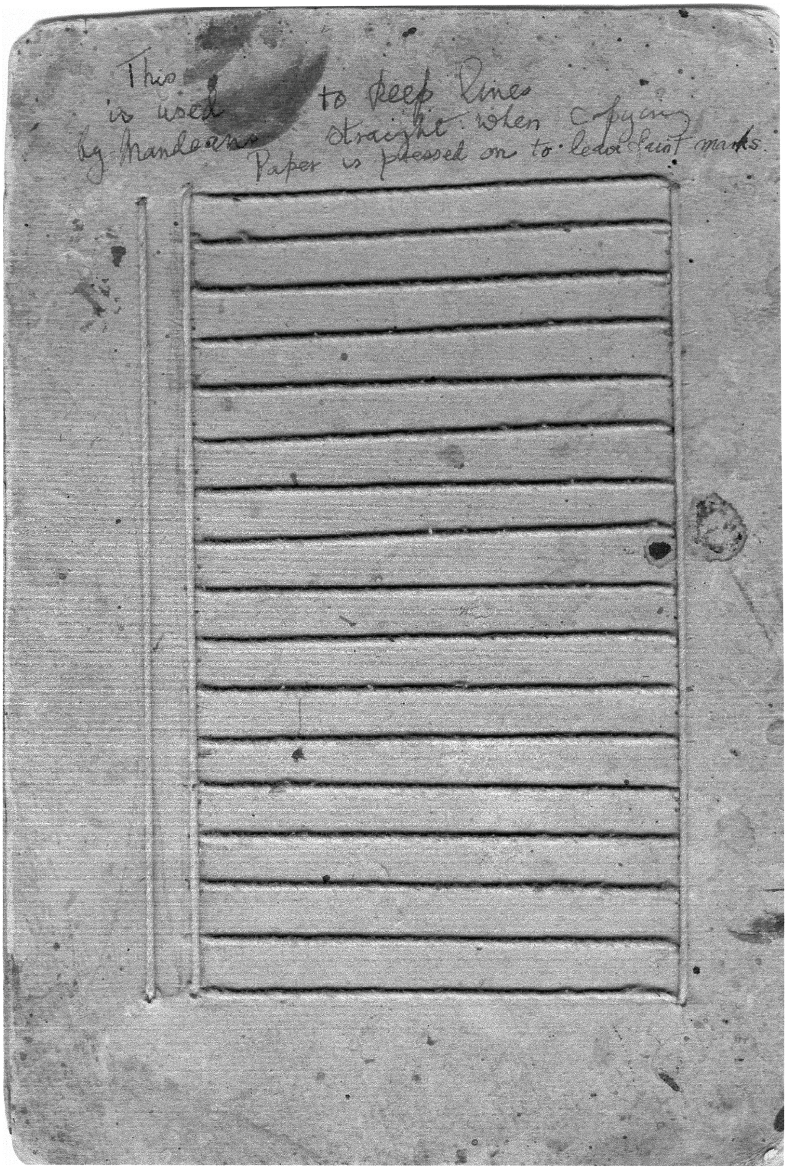
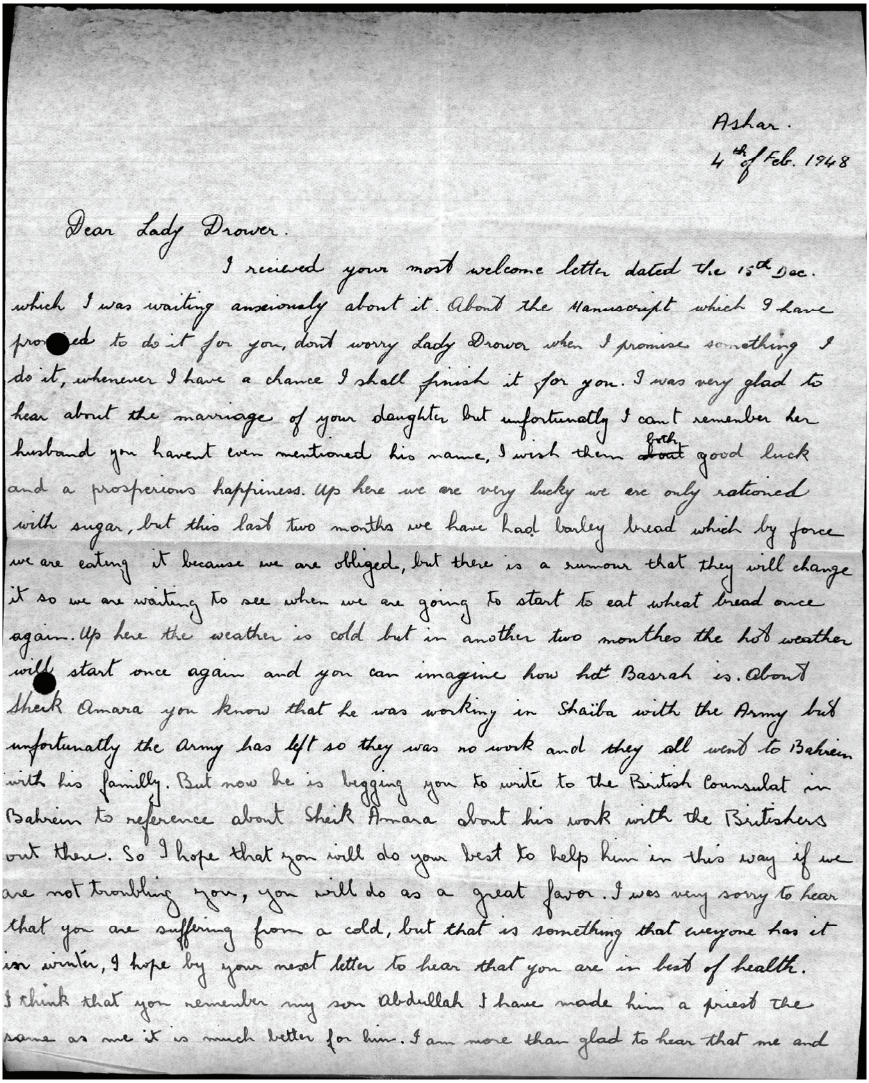

This
is used
by Mandaeans
to keep lines
straight when copying
Paper is pressed on to leave faint marks.

Plate 8. A piece of cardboard with stitched lines of string, used by Mandaean scribes to make neat lines in a manscript. The paper is pressed onto the strings to make lines. This item belonged to Lady Drower and has her handwriting on it. From the Drower archives. Photo by Thomas Buckley.

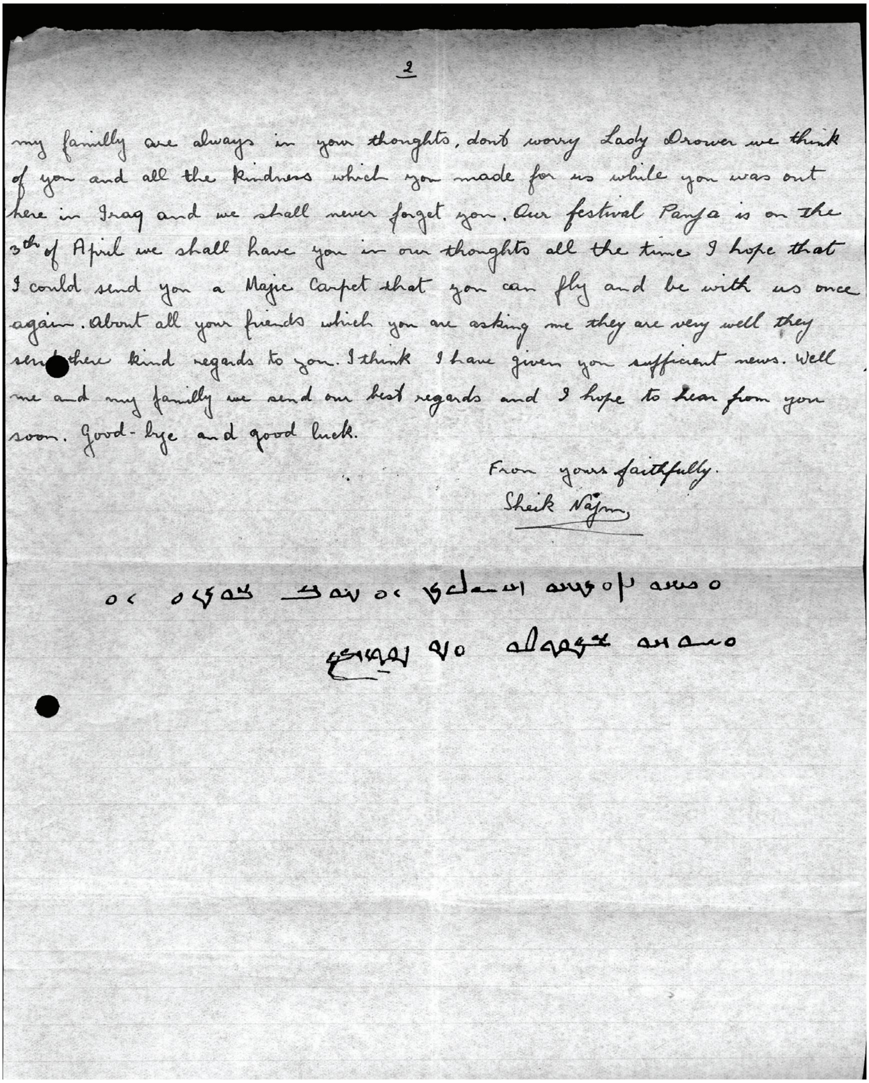


Ashar.
4th of Feb. 1948

Dear Lady Drower.

I recieved your most welcome letter dated the 15th Dec. which I was waiting anxiously about it. About the Manuscript which I have promised to do it for you, dont worry Lady Drower when I promise something I do it, whenever I have a chance I shall finish it for you. I was very glad to hear about the marriage of your daughter but unfortunatly I can't remenber her husband you havent even mentioned his name, I wish them ~~about~~ both good luck and a prosperious happiness. Up here we are very lucky we are only rationed with sugar, but this last two months we have had barley bread which by force we are eating it because we are obliged, but there is a rumour that they will change it so we are waiting to see when we are going to start to eat wheat bread once again. Up here the weather is cold but in another two monthes the hot weather will start once again and you can imagine how hot Basrah is. About Sheik Amara you know that he was working in Shaïba with the Army but unfortunatly the Army has left so they was no work and they all went to Bahrein with his familly. But now he is begging you to write to the British Counsulat in Bahrein to reference about Sheik Amara about his work with the Britishers out there. So I hope that you will do your best to help him in this way if we are not troubling you, you will do as a great favor. I was very sorry to hear that you are suffering from a cold, but that is something that everyone has it in winter, I hope by your next letter to hear that you are in best of health. I think that you remember my son Abdullah I have made him a priest the same as me it is much better for him. I am more than glad to hear that me and

Plate 9. A two-page letter from Sheikh Negm (written by a scribe) to Lady E. S. Drower, dated February 4, 1948. From the Drower archives.



2

my familly are always in your thoughts, dont worry Lady Drower we think of you and all the Kindness which you made for us while you was out here in Iraq and we shall never forget you. Our festival Panja is on the 3th of April we shall have you in our thoughts all the time I hope that I could send you a Majic Carpet that you can fly and be with us once again. About all your friends which you are asking me they are very well they send there kind regards to you. I think I have given you sufficient news. Well me and my familly we send our best regards and I hope to hear from you soon. Good-bye and good luck.

From yours faithfully.
Sheik Najm

Plate 9 *(continued)*.

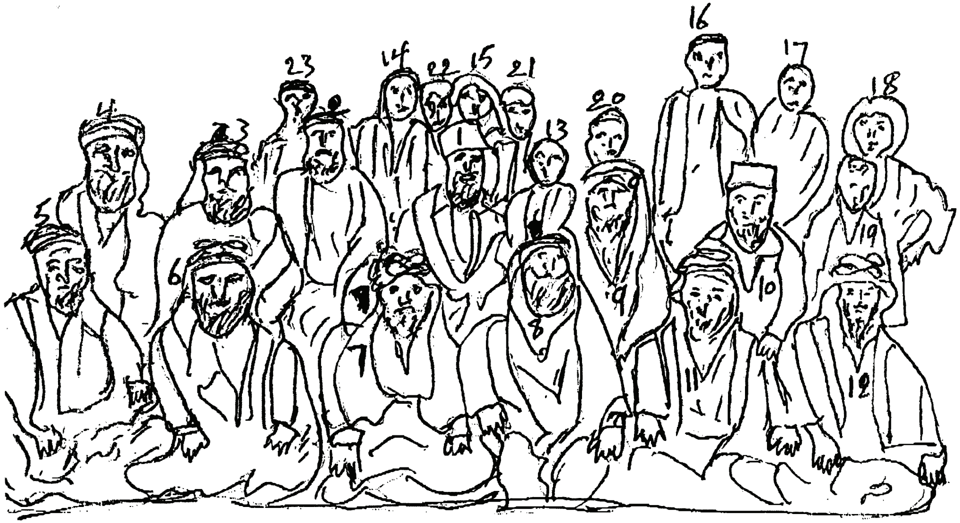


Plate 10. Mandaeans in Khorramshahr, Iran, early 1930s. **1.** Shaikh Matoog Abdul Mir Sobbi. **2.** Atti Meanna. **3.** Abood Ghazawi. **4.** Kemer. **5.** Maaleh Abed Naghdi. **6.** Adam Ashoor Abadi. **7.** Thamer Mahaneh. **8.** Mejod Fathel Azazi. **9.** Joory Malalah. **10.** Bander Malalah Askary. **11.** Gharib Masboob Badry. **12.** Asmeil Maaleh Sobbi. **13.** Nasser Abdul Rahim Sobbi. **14.** Ṭalib Adam Ashoor Abadi. **15.** Abdul Hai Sachet Azazi. **16.** Hantoosh Bander Askary. **17.** Gharib Salem Sobbi. **18.** Abdul Husain Nejoom. **19.** Habib Salem Matoob Sobbi. **20.** Yasser Nasser Sobbi. **21.** Abdurahim Nasser Malalah. **22, 23.** unidentified. Photo key by Mr. Dakhil Shooshtary.

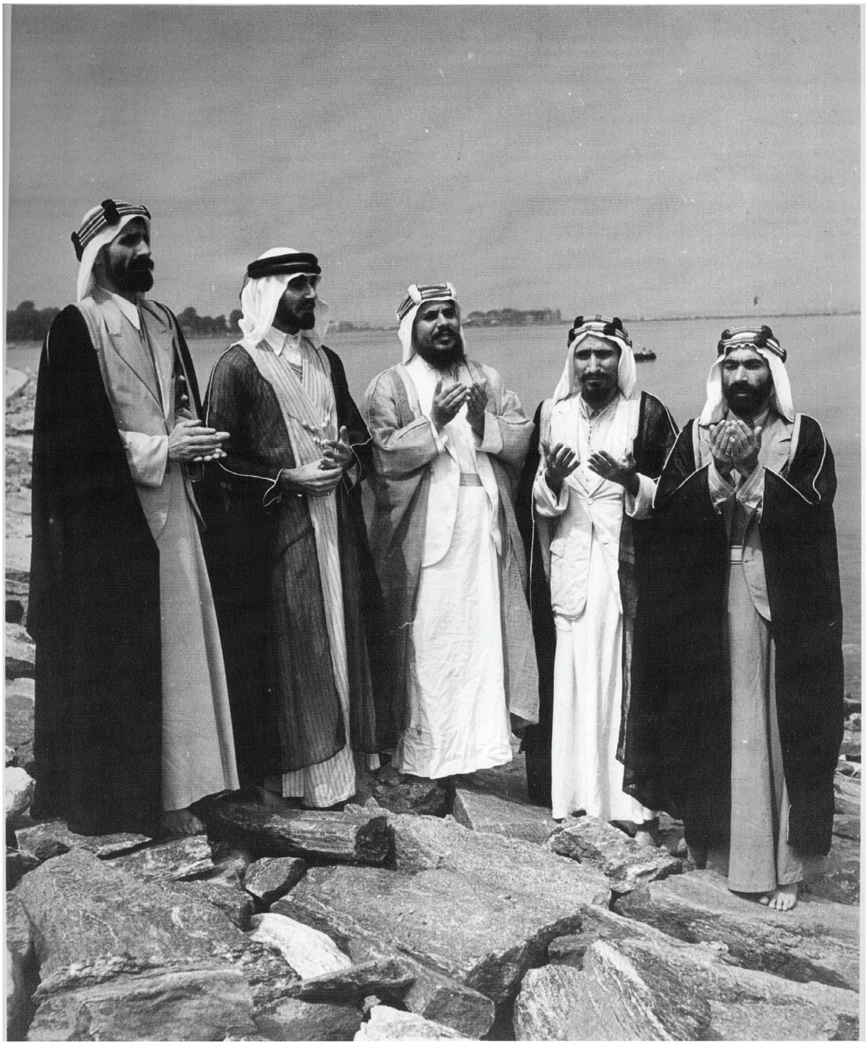


Plate 11. Mandaeans in full traditional dress. *Right to left*: Mr. Noori Khangar El-manahi, Mr. Umarah Zahroun, Mr. Abbas Umarah, Mr. Auda Jaber Aldulaimi, Mr. Nasir Saif. Near LaGuardia Airport, New York, 1939.
Mamoon Aldulaimi Library, New York.

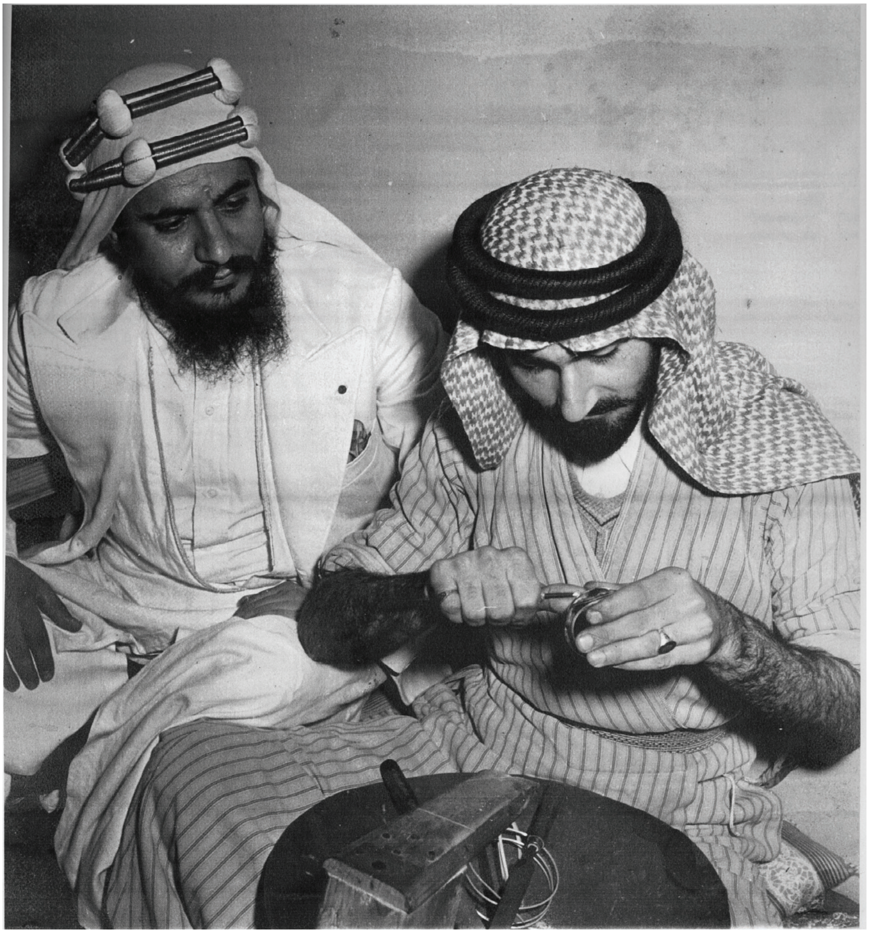


Plate 12. Mandaeans in goldsmith shop. Mr. Auda Jaber Aldulaimi *(right)*, Mr. Abbas Umarah *(left)*. New York, 1939. Mamoon Aldulaimi Library, New York.

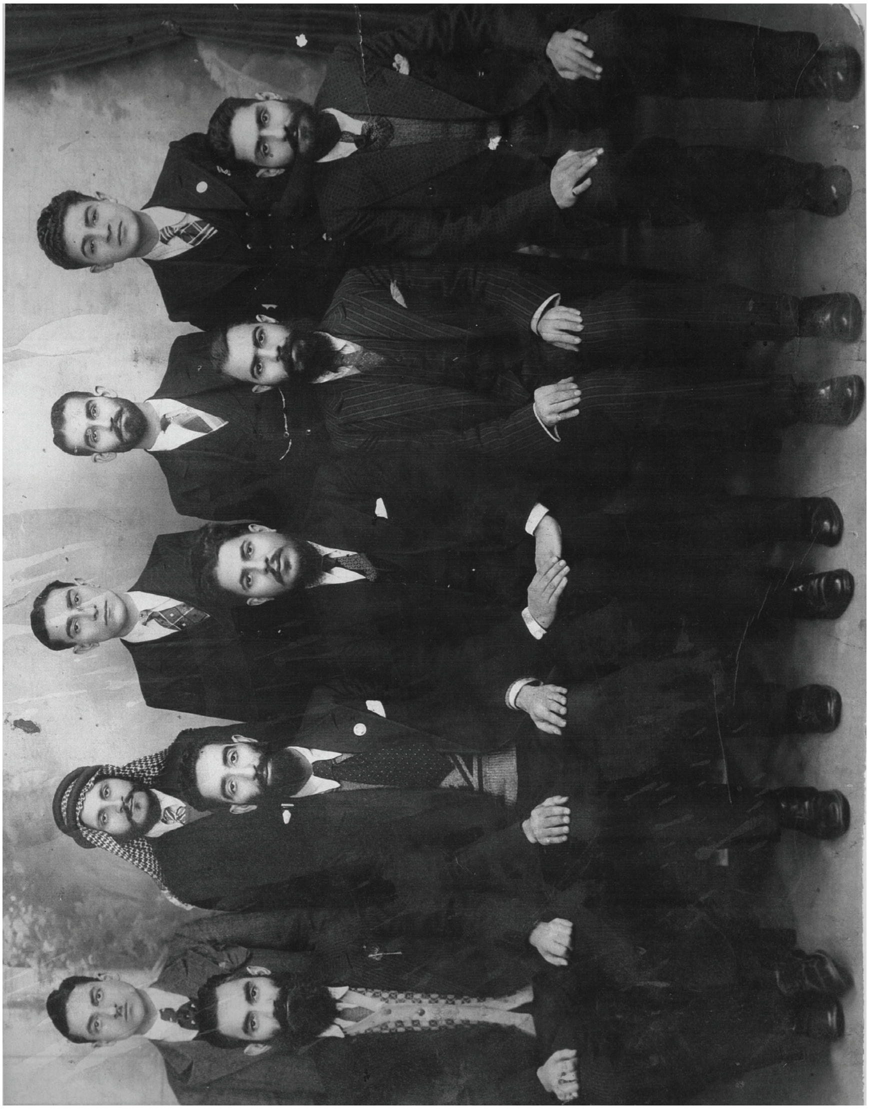


Plate 13. Mandaean gold- and silversmiths representing Iraq at the International Exhibition, Paris, November 27, 1937. *Standing, right to left*: Asmar Hirmes, Auda Jaber Derbash Aldulaimi, Showkat Ghalib Aziz, Aboud Reshoud, unidentified. *Seated, right to left*: Shaty Hachim, Raheem Sadiq, Abbas Amara, Swadi Bachai, Arabi Mukhaiter. Mamoon Aldulaimi Library, New York.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF *MALWAŠIA*/*MAṢBUTA* NAMES, WITH NUMERICAL VALUES

The numbers one through twelve are used by priests in making astrological calculations for individual Mandaeans. From Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*, 68–69 (facsimile pp. 106–7), with my corrections and emendations.

Men

One. Ram, Yuhana, Zihan and Mahan, Ram Ziwa, Daimur
Two. Zakia, Zihrun, Bhira, Bihdad, Bainai, Zazai, Hurmizdukt
Three. Yahia, Maimun, Manduia, Sukhiia, Saiwia, ʿQaiam
Four. Bayan, Bulbul, Sku Yawar, Bulfaraz, Ram Šilai
Five. Sam Paiiš, Ramuia, Šabur, Sabur, Šad Manda
Six. Bihram, Šitil, Sarwan, ʿQaiam, Tibit, Zandana, Brik Yawar, Zakia Yawar
Seven. Mhatam, Bihran, Sandan, Malia
Eight. Šaiar, Ziwa, Šadan, Naṭar
Nine. Anuš, Hibil, Ruzbia, Samuia, Naṭar
Ten. Adam, Baktiar, Baṭia, Zakria
Eleven. BrHiia, Šitlan, Nṣab, Zangia
Twelve. Gadana, Šitluia

Women

One. Hawa, Dihgan, Škinta, Haiuna, Mdinat, Mamuia
Two. Šarat, Samra, Pašta
Three. Šadia, Yasmin, Ruhmaita Hiia, Daia, Dukta, Handa
Four. Mudalal, Rhima, Mihrizad
Five. Anhar, Kaizariʿil
Six. Mahnuš, Bana, Dinartia, Kumraita
Seven. Simat, Muruaria, Buran, Dmut Hiia
Eight. Simat Hiia, Sindaita, Šahmia
Nine. Qinta, Anat Hiia, Kisna, Rhimat Hiia
Ten. Mamania, Marganita, ʿQaimat, Zadia, Suta
Eleven. Muruarid, Manu, Qinta, Paiuia
Twelve. Bibia, Maliha, Nargis, Biṣam

APPENDIX B

CLAN NAMES IN MANDAEAN COLOPHONS

I follow the Mandaic alphabetical sequence. These marks are used: (1) not listed in *MD*; (2) not listed as family name in *MD*. I thank Mr. Asad Askari and Mrs. Qadira D. Sa’ood for help in translating the meaning of some of the names.

Abuzdakad (1)
Abunaṣr (1)
Alaha (1)
Ataualan (1) (“they came to us”?)
Baz (2: “falcon”)
Bṭaha/Baṭahaiia (2; “people of Baṭahaiia”) (from the Misan/ Amara district, Iraq)
Bakšia (2; “gifts”)
Baliq Hiwia (2; “snake charmer”)
Bangania (from Naṣoriyah, Iraq)
Barubai
Barišia (“long-bearded”)
Buhair[1]
Bungir (1)
Buʿsaid (2) (a tribal name from Iraq)
Binda (1)
BrDanqa
Bširia (1)
Gaizania *see* Šaizania
Dabuqaiia (1)
Daudania (1)
Dangania/Dungar (1)
Dubais (1)
Dihdaria (large tribe in Iran)
Dispulia (2; “those from Dezful”)
Diqnana (“bearded”)
Dugania
Durakia/Durašia/Drašia (“books”)
Hadiia (2; “chest,” “eagle”)
Haiun (2)
Halil/Halal (2; “pure”)
Hiuara (2; “white”) (tribe in Iraq)
Wašia (1)
Zahroonia
Zakia (2)
Zakria (2)
Zarzuia
Yahiauia (1; “belonging to Yahia”)
Kamisia
Kuhailia
Kupašia
Laiit
Makušta (1)
Maluha (1)
Maʿilia
Manduia
Masriqania (2; “makers of combs, rakes, harrows”, or: “east”?)

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[1] My informants say, “The Mandaeans were called by this name during the clash with the Jews.” If so, the questions are, when? and where?

Maʿuan (1)
Maʿrup
Mašhadia
Muktar ("prominent," i.e., in a tribe or town)
Murania (1)
Mušarah (indicates a tribe in the Amara district)
Msaʿad (1; ditto)
Msudna (1; ditto)
Nauruzi
Našim (= Negm)
Sakara (2)
Sumair (1)
Sumaqa (2; "red")
Sunia (1) (tribe in Iraq)
ʿAziz
ʿAsakir
ʿArip (2; "sons of ʿArip")
ʿUbadia
ʿUpaišia
ʿKuma (2; "black"), part of the Manduias
Faruk Qala (2)
Fulad ("steel")
Furaih
Firišiia
Ṣilupa/Ṣalupa
Qamnia ("weapons")
Qalsia (1; "red/blond)"), part of the Manduias
Quṭana (2; "young," "short")
Quqia (1)
Qušmana
Qutnaša ("place of the people"?)
Qindila (2; "lamp")
Qlaidani (1)
Ram Ziwa (2)
Rušmana (1)
Rinda (1)
Riš Draz (2; "long beard")
Šaiaš
Šaizania/Šizania/Gaizania
Šapuria
Šukar (2; "sugar")
Šuʿialia ("students")
Šupartaiia
Taumia (2; "twins")
Tutu (1) ("parrot")
Tilidia/Tulaidia/Tulidia (1)

APPENDIX C

THE DROWER COLLECTION IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD

Except for the information regarding *DC 55*, the following descriptions of the documents are transcribed from Drower's own faded, at times almost illegible, old typescript, which was given to me by her daughter in 1988. The list of "Abbreviations" in Drower and Macuch's *MD* provides a list of the *DC* documents, but the information there gives only the titles and dates of the documents, and *DC 55* is not included. The very existence of *DC 52* is doubted, both in the typescript and in *MD*.

In Drower's descriptions, her references to volumes—usually but not always identified as "Ms. Vol."—point to her stack of blue notebooks now kept at the Freie Universität, Berlin; they were sent to Prof. Macuch after her death. In these books, Drower wrote the Mandaean texts by hand, with transliterations and more or less preliminary translations. In her triple color-coded lines, she mainly used pencil, and blue and red or green ink. Prof. Rudolf Macuch graciously gave me access to vol. 31 of Drower's notebooks for several years, and I was able to work toward my translation of *DMʿL* (published in 1993).

As much as possible, I have kept Drower's spellings throughout. Bracketed comments signed "E.S.D." were added later by her. For most of the documents, I have added a few lines of information in parentheses at the end of the description.

DC 1. Codex. Collection of ritual prayers, including those for minor ablutions, rahmia, and lofania. Undated. 238 pp. Poor writing. Transcribed and translated Ms. vol. I, pp. 1–71b.

DC 2. Codex. Sidra d Nishmatha. Copied by Shaikh Nejm for the collector in A.D. 1933 in her (Mandaean) name Klila pth Shushian. 155 pp. The copyist omitted some of the directions to the priest.

DC 3. Codex. Liturgies and ritual prayers. Includes the minor ablutions, the rahmia, qulasta, masiqta, zidqa brikha, myrtle and banner hymns, etc. The original as bought had missing portions at beginning and end.

Shaikh Dukhayl copied and bound these in. There were still some missing pages, which I added in 1936; to these Shaikh Nejm added the pages of the Shabania Shaia, an astrological calculation of auspicious days which follows the marriage hymns. * His pages were taken from an old book. 457 pp.

[This is, as far as I know, the only complete set of liturgical prayers in Europe. E.S.D.] Published, see no. 53. Transliterated and translated in Ms. VIII, IX, XVI, and XVII. * The Shabania Shaia is transliterated and translated in Ms. Bk. X, pp. 16–29b, see also no. 39].

(The portions added by Drower were four prayers, which she copied "very badly, as I was unaccustomed to copying," she writes. The place of copying is unknown—"by the waters of the willow" —and the year is AH 1298/1880 CE, the copyist being Adam Zihrun, son of Yahia Bihram, Manduia clan).

DC 4. Codex. Glossary (so-called 'dictionary') compiled by Shaikh Nejm with the aid of an English-speaking Mandaean. Not quite worthless.

DC 5. Codex. So-called 'Prayers of Yahia.' Illiterate. Copied by Hirmiz bar Anhar. Untransliterated and untranslated.

DC 6. Alf Trisar Shuialia. An incomplete but valuable copy. Roll. This document lacks the first two of its seven parts. In several hands; the writing is mostly excellent. From the part known as the Tafsir Paghra to the end, the copy was completed in the year AH 965 (mid-16th century A.D.) Very useful when taken in conjunction with DC 36.

Length: 1652 lines of smallish writing. About 12" wide. Transliterated and translated, partially, in MS. Vol. V, p. 42–, VI and VII pp. 1–14. Published 1960 by the Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften.

(This document is mentioned in Sh. Negm's letter to Drower of February 1, 1950 [see chap. 5 above]. The place of copying is Šuštar; the year is 1557 CE; copyist: Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan, of the Šaʿpuria clan.)

DC 7. Roll. Diuan d Nahrawatha. Curious illustrated document containing an account of rivers and mountains of the world.

Undated. Translated (mostly) and transliterated in MS. vol. X pp. 66–89. About 3300 words of text.

(The document is dated: AH 1259/1843 CE, from Šuštar, and the copyist is Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, Kupašia. Published in 1982 by Kurt Rudolph, who also used a Baghdad copy of the text, originally from Ahwaz, AH 1336/1917 CE).

DC 8. Roll. Diwan Abatur. An interesting illustrated roll depicting the life of the soul in the purgatories and worlds of light. Published 1960 [Studi e Testi 151].

(Wrapped in linen cloth. The text is probably from Šuštar; it is 48' long, 1' wide. The copyist is Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, Dihdaria and Sabur clans. Undated text, but we know the copyist from other contexts, such as *DC 42*, which he transcribed in 1743.)

DC 9. Roll. Diwan Haran Gawaita. The so-called 'history' of the Mandaeans (the document as now copied is a fragment of a lost text; so is the 17th cent. copy which I now possess). Date, latter half of 19th century. Published 1953. [Studi e Testi 176]. Ms. vol. VII.

(The date is AH 1276/1859 CE. Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, Kupašia, copied it in Margab.)

DC 10. Roll. A qmaha, invocation to Libat (Venus). Bad writing. Translated, together with others, in JRAS 1939, p. 397 ff. MS. Vol. V.

DC 11. Roll. A zrazta, talismanic protective writing in its original protective case. 183 lines and magic drawings. Transliterated Vol. II pp. 72–79 (translation badly needs revision): also Vol. I, 72a–end.

(The case is silver or lead. The text is 2½' wide, on thin paper, and the scroll ends in a wooden cylinder.)

DC 12. Roll. The Pashar Harshia. A qmaha, exorcism of witches and wizards. Purchased from Shaikh Abdallah at Ahwaz in 1933. After introductory lines, 340 in two handwritings. To these the ganzibra copied and affixed the tarikh of another roll which had interested me, and which he refused to sell. This appendix is 80 lines on narrower paper.

Date of qmaha: 1196 AH Transliterated Ms. Vol. III pp. 1–41; XI, p. 35-6 (back).

(Sh. Abdullah was a *tarmida*, not a *ganzibra*. For the scroll that Sh. Abdullah refused to sell, see chap. 5 above. The *qmaha* is from 1782 CE, transcribed at Šaka [unknown] by the river Karka, and the scribe is Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, Kamisia clan. The *tarik* is from 1480, Šuštar, by Yuhana Šitlan, son of Zakia Šitlan, Buhair [see chap. 12 above]).

DC 13. Roll. A zrazta (Roll C). Incomplete. Part of the Zrazta d Hibil Ziwa (see DC 44). Purchased from Shaikh Kumait in 1933. Same roll as (DC 15). Very long, in fine writing. Transliterated and translated in MS. Vol. III, 41–end and VI 1–23.

(The text begins in the middle of a sentence; the handwriting is tiny, the scroll 2¾" wide.)

DC 14. Roll. Part of a long zrazta, also purchased from Shaikh Kumait. 185 lines of minute writing, part of Zrazta of Hibil Ziwa. Useful in conjunction with DC 12, 13 and 15. Transcribed and translated IV pp. 23–38.

(No colophon; bought in Amara.)

DC 15. Roll. Zrazta d Pthahil Rba. (Roll E). Extremely long and minutely written roll. Purchased from Shaikh Nejm, Qala‛t Saleh. Transliterated and translated IV, pp. 38b–100, and V, 1–20.

(No colophon; bought April 1933.)

DC 16. Roll. Exorcism (Roll F). 101 lines. Purchased 1933. Transliterated and partially translated, MS. Vol. V, pp. 20–25.

(This is Pašar Haršia; see DC 12.)

DC 17. Roll. Small exorcism (Roll G). Poor, untranscribed. Untranslated.

(2½" wide. The alphabet is at the end.)

DC 18. Roll. Zarazta d Shuba Shibiahia. Section for each planet. Talisman of the Seven Planets. Copied for the collector from his own roll by Shaikh Faraj in Baghdad, in 1935, and corrected by me from the original.

Transliterated Ms. Vol. VII, pp. 45–52 and translation begun.

(Sh. Faraj's priestly name was Adam, son of Sam. He was famous for making amulets and talismans in his shop in Baghdad).

DC 19. Roll. Shalhafta d Mahra. (Exorcism of disease demons). Copied as DC 18. Transliterated and translated Ms. Vol. VII pp. 52a–57b.

(This actually contains two texts: text 1 is from AH 1250/ 1834 CE, text 2 is from AH 1355/1935 CE. Sheikh Faraj did the copying in June 1935. The second text may be his own. In December 1935, Drower copied and corrected another text [both, or one?].)

DC 20. Roll. Shafta d Dahlulia. An exorcism of bogies. Copied as DC 18 and 19 and corrected by E.S.D. from Faraj's roll. Dated 1250 AH. Magical figures. Purchased 1935. Transliterated and translated Ms. Vol. VII pp. 64a–74b.

(1834 CE. Bogdan Burtea of Freie Universität, Berlin, has edited and translated this roll. Its title is "Exorcism against Fear and Weeping." It was copied in Baghdad for Drower, and it has 236 lines and illustrations. Originally, it was copied in the town of Šaṭia [unknown to me].)

DC 21. Roll. Shafta d Pishra d Ainia (exorcism of evil eye and eye diseases). Copied by Faraj, as above, Dec. 1935. His roll dated 1250 AH Magical figures. Transliterated and translated Ms. Vol. VII pp. 74–100 and VIII 1–4. Published JRAS Oct. 1937, 589 ff. and Jan. 1939, 1 ff. [Note by E.S.D. "I find much to correct in this translation now."]

(The roll is wrongly dated: it should be AH 1270/1853 CE. It has 803 lines. The original copyist is Adam, son of Bihram, Ṣabur.)

DC 22. Codex. Sidra Rba d Mara d Rabutha or Ginza Rba or Sidra d Adam. Purchased from Shaikh Nejm in 1936. Date 1254 AH (c. 1839 A.D.).

A fine copy of the most important of all codices. Transl. and published by Lidzbarski in 1925.

(The correct date is 1831 CE/AH 1247 The copyist is Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, Kupašia. He completed *GR* in Qurna, *GL* in Basra; see chap. 3 above. Lidzbarski of course used the Paris manuscripts in his publication of the *Ginza*. There is a letter, dated February 2, 1936, from Sh. Negm to Drower about *DC 22*; see chap. 5.)

DC 23. Pashra Sumqa (or Smaq). Exorcism of fever demons. Purchased from Sh. Nejm 1936. Transliterated Vol. XXVI 35a–41b. Untranslated. On reverse, Qmaha Gastata. Also an exorcism of women's diseases and bewitchments.

(The exorcism Pašra Sumqa is from AH 1226/1811 CE, Basra; it has 777 lines plus colophon. It is written for Sam Bihram, son of Bibia Mudalal [see chap. 8 and elsewhere above for her]. The scribe is Bihram Sam, son of Yahia Zihrun; Bihram Sam is the father of Ram Zihrun. This means that Bihram Sam wrote it for his grandson, Sam Bihram).

DC 24. Roll. Sharh d Parwanaiia. The Ritual of the Five Days Intercalary Feast. Gives ritual for the consecration of the cult-hut, slaughter of dove, zidqa brikha, myrtle ritual, etc.; also for the Ahaba d Mania, of Giving of Clothes (for the dead). Dated 1248 AH Transliterated and partly translated Ms. Vol. XV, pp. 10–17 (back).

(Bogdan Burtea has published this text, which dates to 1832, Muhammerah. The scribe is Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, Kamisia.)

DC 25. Roll. Qmaha. Purchased Hirmiz bar Anhar, Baghdad, 1936. Untransliterated and untranslated.

(Written on ledger paper, the text has some holes. There is an Arabic text at the end and a diagram.)

DC 26. Roll. Two qmahia or exorcism rolls, copied by Shaikh Faraj from a roll in his brother's writing, and transcribed in the name of my daughter, Margaret daughter of Stefana (Marganitha pth Klila). Dec. 1936.

Bit Mishqal Ainia (note the prayer of this title) (another copy subsequently purchased, no. 28). Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XII, pp. 29b–55a. Published in Iraq V (1938), p. 116.

Rish Tus Tanina. (Another copy purchased from Sh. Nejm, DC 40).

Transliterated and partly translated Ms. Vol. X, also in XXXIII and XXVIII, pp. 19–23.

[Part of (b) forms a section of the Zrazta d Hibil Ziwa, but there are differences.]

(Copied 1936. Sh. Faraj copied it from Sh. Dakhil [= Mhatam Yuhana, son of Adam Zihrun, Manduia]).

DC 27. Roll. Zihrun Raza Kasia. Purchased May 1937 from Shaikh Yahia, Qal'at Salih. Illustrated. A commentary on the ritual of the Masiqta. Date: 1088 AH (c. 1677 A.D.). 559 lines of text and long descriptions of the frequent illustrations. Transliterated and partially translated, MS. Vol. XII, pp. vi–256.

(Bogdan Burtea has published this text. It hails from Šuštar, copied by Zihrun, son of Yahia Mhatam, ʿAziz clan. There are illustrations of named officiating, prototypical priests, and of trees.)

DC 28. Roll. Pishra d Bit Mishqal Ainia. Qmaha, or exorcism roll. (see DC 26 (a).) Date: 1272 AH Purchased from Shaikh Nejm June 1937. Published (see 26 above).

(The date is 1855—"by the waters of a marsh"—seemingly by copyist Ram Zihrun, son of Bihram Sam, Kupašia.)

DC 29. Roll. Pishra d Ainia, or Pashar Ainia. See no. 21. Exorcism of the Evil Eye. Purchased from Shaikhs Nejm and Yahia, Nov. 1937. Date: 1329 AH. A modern copy, in some ways inferior to 21 but useful for variants, missing words, etc. Published (see under 21).

(The year of the copying is 1911 CE; 824 lines.)

DC 30. Codex. Drasha d Yahia. Purchased from Shaikhs Nejm and Yahia, Nov. 1937. Date 1166 AH (c. 1753 A.D.) Good script.

(From Šuštar; Ram Yuhana, son of Ram, Dihdaria, is the copyist; see DC 8 and 42.)

DC 31. Loose-leaved Codex. Asfar Malwashia. Astrological codex purchased from Shaikhs Nejm and Yahia, Nov. 1937. Date: 1247 AH (c. 1812 A.D.) Well-written copy. Translit. and translated Vol. X p. 89–100, XI pp. 1–100, XII Published as The Book of the Zodiac by Royal Asiatic Society, London. 1949.

DC 32. Roll. The qmahia of Nirigh, Sira and Libat (exorcism of Mars, Moon and Venus). Purchased 1938. Copied by Sh. Nejm from his book of magic. Love-talisman. Corrupt from much copying. MS. Vol. XII.

(Oddly, Sh. Negm gives the Christian date, 1937.)

DC 33. Roll. Three qmahia (exorcism rolls) in one:
Shuba lbishna
ʿSirna hthimna
Yawar Ziwa nishimtai. Purchased at Litlata April 1938. Published.
JRAS Oct. 1937 p. 589 ff. and Jan. 1938, p. 1ff.
(No date, no colophon.) The purchase date must be wrong.

DC 34. Diwan malkuta ʿLaitha. A secret initiation text concerned with the consecration of priests. Purchased from Sh. Nejm, April 1939. 1353 lines of text. Copiously illustrated, with long portions of text also between the illustrations. Much reverenced by Mandaeans. Date 1204 AH (c. A.D. 1789). Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XXXI p. 5a–79a.

(Mentioned in Sh. Negm's letter of February 1, 1950, though he may be referring to another copy. Copied by Bihram Sam, son of Yahia Yuhana, Dihdaria; he also copied *DC 44*. I published a translation of and commentary on this text in 1993, American Oriental Society Translation Series 3).

DC 35. Roll. Diuan Maṣbuta Hibil Ziwa. The Baptism of Hibil-Ziwa. 544 lines of pure text, and then 12 ft. 11 in. of text and illustration mixed. Bought in Persia through Shaikh Nejm, April 29th, 1939. Date 1247 AH (c. 1750 A.D.). Published Studi e Testi 176, Vatican, 1953.

(The Christian date is wrong: it should be 1831 AD. This document is probably the "*Diwan* for Interpretations," as Sh. Negm calls it in his letter to Drower of December 13, 1938.)

DC 36. Roll. Alf Trisa Shuialia. The Thousand and Twelve Questions. (see no. 6). A fine copy. All the seven parts are present, and to these a copy of the Haran Gawaita (see no. 9) has been added, by the copyist. Small fine writing, 17 yards 14 in. long and 12" wide. The first 59 in. were rewritten by a priest in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries; he has also patched here and there where the roll was damaged by wear or fire. Purchased with DC 35 and 37, 38 and 39. Date: 1088 AH (c. A.D. 1677). Resume published JRAS April 1941. Complete publication Deutsche Akad. d. Wiss. Berlin, 1960 (Veröff. nr. 32.).

(The copyist is Zakia Zihrun, son of Ram, Kuhailia; the place is Šuštar. Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, Kamisia, rewrote the first part and also made repairs, as Drower says).

DC 37. Roll. Shafta d Mahsifan Rba. Qmaha. Exorcism roll. Purchased April 1939 with above. Date: 1278 AH Transliterated and mostly translated MS. Vol. XXXI, pp. 79b–end. Unpublished.

(This document, The Scroll of the Great Overthrower, dates to 1861, transcribed by Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, in Suq eš-Šuyuk. The scroll has 633 lines, with odd diagrams between lines 253 and 265.)

DC 38. Roll. Shafta d Qashtina. An interesting qmaha. Purchased April 1939 from Sh. Nejm with DC 36, 37, 39. Date: 1216 AH (c. 1802 A.D.). A copy of this was already in the Bodleian. Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XXVI pp. 69a–90b; XXX 1–30.

(This scroll, The Scroll of the Archer, was transcribed by the father of Yahia Bihram: Adam Yuhana, son of Sam. The place of copying is Šuštar. In the Bodleian, this document has become transposed with its neighbor, DC 39, so that it appears as DC 39.)

DC 39. Codex. Sharh d Qabin d Shishlam Rba. The Wedding of the Great Shishlam. The ritual, prayers and poems for the marriage ceremony. Somewhat fuller than the same in the Qulasta.

With appendix, the Shabaniia Shaiaia (see no. 3). Purchased by Sh. Nejm for me in Iran, with above, April 1939. Date: 1216 AH (c. 1802 A.D.). Published Studi e Testi 151 (Rome, Pontif. Inst., 1950).

(The date is 1217; the place of copying is Huwaiza, the scribe Adam Yuhana, son of Sam, Kamisia. See above, regarding the switch with *DC 38*).

DC 40. Roll. The Pashra Mihla. The Exorcism of Salt. A very long roll in the manner of Pishra d Ainia. The exorcism of illness, barrenness, devils, etc. by an invocation of personified salt. This is followed by the Rish Tus Tanina (see no. 26 (b)). Handwriting is poor, but the scribe respects his text. Purchased from Sh. Nejm, May 1939. AH 1247. Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. 28 pp. 1 ff.

(Sh. Negm mentions this in his letter to Drower of December 13, 1938. The text was copied in the year of the plague, 1831, by Bihram, son of Ram Zihrun. Dr. Michael Tarelko at the Belarusian State University has translated the text.)

DC 41. Roll. Alma Rishaia Rba. Secret ritual text, with commentary, used in the initiation of priests. Text about 545 lines. Illustrated. Date: 1220 (? 1224) AH Good writing. Bought from Shaikh Nejm from Iraq, autumn 1939. Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XXV pp. 24a–89b.

(Sh. Negm mentions this scroll in his letter of November 8, 1939. Published, together with *Alma Rišaia Zuṭa*, 1963).

DC 42. Roll. Sharh d Ṭabahata. Ritual roll for the mass performed yearly at Parwanaiia, and for other sacraments performed at that time. Continued on back of ms. Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XXII l. 114–391, XXIII, pp. 61–100 and (backwards) to 86a.

(The text is from AH 1156/1743 CE, and it has 834 lines. It remains unpublished. Sh. Negm mentions it in his letter of November 8, 1939).

DC 43. Roll. A collection of exorcisms and magic, "The poor priest's Treasury," containing

Qmaha d ṣir Sahria
Qmaha d Shaiul
Shuba libishna, ʿsirna bthimna, Yawar Ziwa (for these three, see no. 33)
Shalhafta d Mahria (see no. 19)
Qmaha d Dahlulia (see no. 20)
Qmaha d Gastata
Qmaha d Br Ingaria

Qmaha d Yurba
Qmaha d Suba
Qmaha d Qastina (of no. 39 and copy in Bodleian).

On the back, talismans in Arabic. Very curious. Purchased from Shaikh Nejm in 1939. Date: 1270 AH Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. XXIV pp. 1–50.

(The text is from 1853. Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana, is the scribe. In the Arabic talismans, there is a drawing of a male figure with numbers on his limbs. The text has other drawings, too.)

DC 44. Roll. Zrazta d Hibil Ziwa (or, Manda d Hiia). The longest and most popular of all talismans. Very long (excerpts sometimes found on magic bowls). In good script, but the text, from much copying, is somewhat corrupt. (A portion of this text is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). In five sections, each of which is sometimes written as separate talismans. (cf. Nos. 12, 13, 14 and 15). Beginning badly copied in by Shaikh Nejm. Purchased 1939 from Shaikh Nejm. Date: 1209 AH (De Morgan published a facsimile of part of this text but did not translate it). Transliterated and translated, Ms. Vol. XXIX, 1?–end.

(This is mentioned in Sh. Negm's letter of November 8, 1939. Copied in Qurna in 1794 by Sam Bihram, son of Yahia Yuhana, Dihdaria, who was also the scribe of *DC 34*.)

DC 45. Looseleaved Codex. Fragment of magical text. Purchased from Shaikh Nejm in 1941. Transliterated and translated Ms. Vol. XXIV p. 91–end; XXV p. 1–XXIII (see also XV). Leaves from Harshia Bishia (see 46) Vol. XXII 92b–100b and XXIII 1a– 27b.

(No date. There are Arabic letters and numerals, and Mandaic text. Ink stains.)

DC 46. Book of black magic and talismans. Copied by Shaikh Abdallah March 1942; selections were published in JRAS 1943 pp. 149–181. MS. Vol. XXVI, pp. 90–end; XXV pp. 1–23b. Harshia Bishia vol. XXIV 91a–100a; XXIII pp. 28a–61a.

(Regarding this text, *MD*, 9a, notes that it contains the phrase "write on a strip of gazelle-[skin]." There is Arabic text, drawings and signs.)

DC 47. Roll. Pishra d Shambra. Published in Orientalia 15 (1946) 324 ff. 'A Phylactery for Rue.' Another copy is in the Bodleian.

("Received Feb. 10, 1945, Baghdad," Drower writes. Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana is the copyist.)

DC 48. Roll. Alma Rishaia Zuṭa. A lengthy roll, illustrated. Date: 972 AH. Of less literary value than Alma Rishaia Rba. Transliterated and translated Ms. Vol. XXX pp. 17–end. XXXI pp. 1–4. See also Vol. L (50) pp. 56b–88a (a second translation?).

(The text's date is 1564 CE; it hails from Šuštar. The scribe is Adam Zihrun, son of Bihram Šitlan, of the Ša'puria clan. See above regarding DC 41 for publication.)

DC 49. Roll. An exorcism. Small. As yet unread.
(No date.)

DC 50. Sharh d Maṣbuta Rabtia. Ritual roll describing the 360 baptisms for a polluted priest; also Fifty Baptisms and the Raza Rba d Zihrun. Date: 1284 AH Transliterated and translated MS. Vol. I.

(The text has 962 lines, is from 1867 CE—Drower has AH 1284, which is wrong—and was copied by Yahia Bihram, son of Adam Yuhana; see chap. 7 above for Yahia Bihram's texts.)

DC 51. Roll. Pishra d Pugdama d Mia. Exorcism invoking the personified waters of life. The first part in an illiterate hand has many mistakes, but this is a most interesting exorcism. It is hoped to find a better example. Date: 1277 AH Transliterated and partly translated MS. Vol. L, pp. 88a and reverse -89a.

(The text has 853 lines; it is copied in Margab, the Mandaean quarter of Suq es-Šuyuk "by Fraš Ziwa, in the yard of a Turk." The date is 1860, the scribe Ram Zihrun, son of Sam Bihram, Kupašia).

DC 52? (Missing.)

DC 53. Loose-leaved Codex Collection of liturgical prayers and hymns (the Canonical Prayerbook). See no. 3. Published 1959. The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans (Brill, Leiden).

DC 54. Roll. Tarasa d taga d Shishlam Rba. Published 1962. The Coronation of the Great Shishlam. Being a description of the rite of coronation of a Mandaean priest. Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1962.

(The text is from Basra, AH 1008/1599 CE, by Sam Šitlan, son of Ram Bayan, Šaʿpuria clan).

* * *

DC 55. As the last of the items in *DC*, we find *DC 55*: Drower's notebook. No one, to my knowledge, has ever studied this document (its very existence has seldom been mentioned in scholarly literature). There are no dates for any of the notes or entries, and the page numbers are in Drower's own handwriting (despite the printed numbers on every page). It would be desirable for someone to conduct a study of *DC 55*, trying to correlate its contents with known events from Drower's scholarly life. Here I offer selected snippets from *DC 55*.

In the notebook we find a list of hotels in Persia, translations of the prayers called the *rahma*s, and a travel account named "On the Way to Basra" (p. 10). A particularly interesting feature is an account involving the famous British excavator and diplomat Austen Henry Layard (1817–1894) and how one of the British Library *Ginza*s came to England. This information amplifies—and complicates—issues I have treated in chapter 4 above. The British Embassy requested protection for Sh. Yahia (and his family), who sold the *Ginza*. Layard appears to have been the middleman in the transaction. I assume the sheikh is Yahia Bihram, and the *Ginza* must be one of the three procured by the British Museum through Consul Taylor's widow in April 1860. But why is Layard mentioned in *DC 55*, and not Taylor?

Lupieri says that Yahia Bihram was still alive in the year 1870,[1] and now, in *DC 55*, we learn that in 1873 Yahia sent the *Ginza* to Queen Victoria. The book ended up in the British Museum. On September 16, 1878, Layard wrote to the Queen, and the next day he addressed Yahia in a letter. The contents include the following:

> To Sheikh Yahia in Suq es-Šuyuk.
>
> My good friend,
>
> Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to give you a further sum of 100 pounds. …

Three hundred pounds was sent to Yahia, all in all. If the seller indeed is Yahia Bihram, this is the latest date we have for him.

On p. 22 of *DC 55*, there are notes on the solar year; on the back of p. 29 is a draft of a letter to Sh. Negm about Herr Popper (one of Drower's long-time friends), who wishes to know when *ATŠ* will be ready. It looks like he is buying a manuscript of the text; the entire cost is 50 rupees. As yet, I have no corroborative information about such a transaction.

From p. 31 to p. 65 comes a wide variety of notes, quotes, lists of festivals (Persian and Sogdian), "must read" lists, and a reference to Hans Jonas's *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist.* Oddly, like a *Ginza*, the notebook now continues in an upside-down fashion, and one has to turn it around to read it.

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[1] Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, 119.

Next comes a postcard, from November 8, 1952, to A. L. Beeston, Oriental Mss., Bodleian Library. It says,

> Translation and transliteration of D. C 36 and D. C 6 [i.e., *ATŠ*] being over, they are ready to come back to the Bodley. I leave for some months to Egypt on Dec. 18th and shall feel much happier if they, and all the other Mandaean Mss. were in safe keeping, also the typescript of the Mandaean Dictionary! What do you suggest as the best form of transport if Bodley consents to have them until they are required—all eventually coming to Bodley? The dictionary is in two light wooden containers with compartments—one to each letter—bulky and impossible to bring by hand. A car would be best if you know anyone who would transport them carefully.
>
> Can you suggest anything?
>
> E. S. Drower

Next, we find notes on the *lofani* ritual ("Last night it was Sheikh Rumi who represented the dead man") and on the Mandaean wedding rituals. On p. 178 (verso), Drower gives information on Sh. Abdullah's *tarik* from 1480 (see chap. 12 above). But she misstates the year as 1384. One is forced to wonder whether Yuhana Šitlan, the writer of the *tarik*, describes events nearly a century earlier. I very much doubt this. Drower says that "the big killing" was 546 Mandaean years ago. We know about details of the pogrom from Yuhana Šitlan's testimony in this *tarik*. The various numbers that Drower gives regarding Mandaean demographics differ from those of the *tarik*: for instance, she says that there were fifteen *ganzibra*s in Šuštar before the killings, but Yuhana Šitlan gives the number as fifty. The rulers during the pogrom are Sultan Mahsin ibn Mahdi in Amara, and his son Feyyadh, the governor of Šuštar. These are indeed the rulers identified by Yuhana Šitlan at the time when he is writing the *tarik*.

At the end of the notebook comes a list, with descriptions, of the documents that Drower transcribed in her blue notebooks. But the roster is incomplete, as there are only thirty texts. Therefore, the end of *DC 55* must have been written before the final completion of the *DC* collection.

ABBREVIATIONS AND EDITIONS

ARR	*Alma Rišaia Rba*	Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*
ARZ	*Alma Rišaia Zuṭa*	Drower, *Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries*
ATŠ	*Alf Trisar Šuialia*	Drower, *Thousand and Twelve Questions*
CP	*Canonical Prayerbook*	Drower, *Canonical Prayerbook*
DC	Drower Collection	(see Appendix C above)
Diw. Ab.	*Diwan Abatur*	Drower, *Diwan Abatur*; Euting, *Mandäischer Diwan*
Diw. Nahr.	*Diwan Nahrawata*	Rudolph, *Mandäische ‘Diwan der Flüsse’*
DMʿL	*Diwan Malkuta ʿLaita*	Buckley, *Scroll of Exalted Kingship*
GL	*Left Ginza*	Lidzbarski, *Ginza*; Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*
GR	*Right Ginza*	Lidzbarski, *Ginza*; Petermann, *Sidra Rabba*
HG	*Haran Gawaita*	Drower, *Haran Gawaita*
JB	*Johannesbuch*	Lidzbarski, *Johannesbuch*
Mand. Lit.		Lidzbarski, *Mandäische Liturgien*
MD		Drower and Macuch, *Mandaic Dictionary*
MHZ	*Maṣbuta ḏ-Hibil Ziwa*	Drower, *Haran Gawaita*
MII		Drower, *Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran*
Sfar M.	*Sfar Malwašia*	Drower, *Book of the Zodiac*
ZRK	*Zihrun Raza Kasia*	B. Burtea, *Zihrun*

GLOSSARY

I follow the Mandaic alphabetical sequence.

abagada	alphabet
anana dakita	pure cloud
anašia ḏ-ktiba	People of the Book
ansa	copied
ašṭa	(see *ʿustad*)
bimanda	cult hut
br	son
ganzibra	higher-ranking priest
ganiba	unclean person
dukhrana	mentioning
dinaiia	tribunals
drabšia	banners
draša	book
drašia	teachings
dhimmi (Ar.)	protected religious minority
zhara	warning; insertion
himiana	sacred belt
ṭupsa	original manuscript
yalufa	scribe
yardna	Jordan, flowing water
kašla	jewel
kdaba	writing
kdab(a) ʿda	manuscript
kurasa	looseleaf manuscript; separate scrolls
kušṭa	truth
kimṣa	receptacle; formation
kiniana	clan name
ktaba	writing
laufa	connection between upper and lower worlds
laqab	family name
lbuša	garment
lofani	(a ritual)
maknušta	gathered, edited
malwašia	Zodiac names
mandi	cult hut
masiqta	death mass
maṣbuta	baptism
margna	priestly staff
maškna	cult hut
maṭar(a)ta	"toll station"
Mostashar	(an honorific)
mutana	cholera epidemic
mšiha	anointed one

naṣuraiia	learned Mandaeans, mainly the priestly class
naṣiruta	priestly knowledge
sadarata	arrangement
saka, *s—a*	end, limit
sidra	book
ʿbin	son
ʿda	hand, manuscript
ʿustad	craftsman
ʿutra	light-being
ʿniana	response
padria	(Christian) priest
paiiz	autumn
paisaq	a layman allowed to do some priestly duties
Panja	five-day intercalary festival
Parwanaiia	id.
pišra	exorcism
qina	tribe
rahma	devotions
rba	teacher
rušuma	“signing” prayer
riš ama	head of the people
riš d̲-dara	head of the age
šabiq	forgiver
šauir	district
šapta	scroll
šarh	scroll; liturgy
šugiana	defective
škinta	a domain of the Lightworld
taga	crown
tarik	colophon; post-script
tarmida	lower-order priest

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See Appendix C above.

OTHER MANUSCRIPTS IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Hunt. 6 (Ginza), unpublished.
Hunt. 71 (JB) (see Lidzbarski, *JB*, *Ms. D.*).
Marsh. 691. Prayers, unpublished.
Ms. Asiat Misc. C 12: Diwan d̲-Qadaha Rba Šuma d̲-Mara d̲-Rabuta u-Dmut Kušṭa (The Scroll of the Great Prayer, the Name of the Lord of Greatness and the Image of Truth), unpublished.
Ms. Asiat. Misc. C 13: *Diwan Razia d̲-Abahata* (The Scroll [of] the Secrets *of the Parents*), unpublished.
Ms. Syr. E 15 (a small prayerbook, 151 folios).
Ms. Syr. E, 18 (prayers), unpublished.
Ms. Syr. F 2 (R) (Mandaean liturgies) (see Lidzbarski, *Mand. Lit.*).
Ms. Syr. G 2 (R): Qaština ("The Archer") and *Šambr*a ("The Rue").

BRITISH LIBRARY

Add. 23, 599, Add. 23. 600, and Add. 23. 601: three *Ginzas.*
23.602A *Kholasta sive liturgica Sabiorum Libri Joannis Fragmenta Mendaice* (scrapbook of Mandaean manuscript fragments).
OR 6592 (Lidzbarski's "Roll A"), marriage liturgy.
OR 6593 (Lidzbarski's "Roll B"), apotropaic contents.
The two rolls A and B are in one container, and both are from 1869, the first one from Muhammerah and the second one from Qurna.

2. Mandaean Texts in private, Mandaean ownership

MR. SINAN ABDULLAH

JB (photocopy, from 1991).

MR. MAMOON ALDULAIMI

Ginza (photocopy from 1937 or 1940; the date wavers).

MS. LAMEA ABBAS AMARA

Two *Ginza*s (from 1886 and 1935).
JB (from 1922).
Sfar Malwašia (from 1919).

MR. NASSER SOBBI

Ginza (from 1989).
JB (from 1910).
HG (from 1930).

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